Revs. Newman Hall, Mr. Stratten, Dr. Angus, F. Trestrail, W. Stott, and Mr. Nicholson, of Bristol. During the afternoon, about £130 was given or promised by those present. At half-past five, about 500 persons sat down to tea; and at seven, the Rev. Newman Hall preached to an overflowing audience.

WINSLOW, BUCKS.—The foundation-stone of a new Baptist chapel was laid at Winslow on Tuesday, May 3rd. A large and commodious tent was erected on the chapel ground, and in this tent the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon preached to large congregations, in the morning from Romans i. 16, and in the evening from Mark vii. 32. At half-past one o'clock a cold collation was provided at the Bell Assembly-room. At a quarter-past three the tent was crowded. The service was commenced by singing. A psalm was read by the Rev. E. L. Foster, of Stony Stratford. Prayer for the blessing of God to rest upon the building about to be erected for the worship of His great and holy Name was offered by Mr. Spurgeon; after which John Neal, Esq., of London, exhibited the bottle about to be deposited under the foundation-stone, and described the contents thereof, which were a copy of *The Freeman*, *The Christian World*, *The Baptist Messenger*, and some local papers, as well as a paper giving the history of the church and an account of its present position. Henry Kelsall, Esq., of Rochdale, then laid the stone, and delivered a suitable address. Addresses were also delivered by J. Olney, Esq., of London, and by the Revs. C. H. Spurgeon, and H. Killen, of Bedford. At five o'clock 400 persons partook of tea. The donations and collections during the day amounted to £227, in addition to which the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, who had already given £20, promised to give the last £20 required. It was stated during the proceedings that the well-known Benjamin Keach was formerly pastor of a church in Winslow. He was afterwards pastor of the church over which Mr. Spurgeon now presides.

CHIPPENHAM.—The Rev. J. J. Joplin is about to remove from this town to Halifax, Nova Scotia. His ministry at Chippenham has been attended by much that is truly gratifying. During Mr. Joplin's pastorate, upwards of seven years, a good congregation has been raised, a church of seventy members has been gathered, a Sunday school well established and efficiently conducted. At the time of his settlement there was a debt of nearly £800 on the building. By a vigorous effort, aided by neighbouring ministers, especially the Rev. T. E. Fuller, then of Melksham, this has been entirely removed. An admirable school-room has been erected by the people at a cost of £200. The ground on which the chapel and school-room stand was held on lease, with the right of purchase for £400, towards which £350 have been raised, chiefly by Mr. Joplin's own exertions. He has, therefore, the pleasure of knowing that the pecuniary burden on his beloved people has been almost entirely removed. Mr. Joplin enjoys the respect of his fellow-townsmen, the sympathy of Christians of all denominations, and the most affectionate regard of his own flock. His removal is, therefore, the occasion of much regret. Mr. Joplin is about to take charge of the new Baptist church meeting in the Tabernacle, Halifax, Nova Scotia. The negotiation on the part of the church has been conducted in the most frank and honourable manner, and it is sincerely hoped that Mr. Joplin's settlement in that important city will be the means of extensive and permanent good. Mr. and Mrs. Joplin, with their family, will sail early in June.

DUNCAN STREET, NEWINGTON, EDINBURGH.—The church under the pastoral care of the Rev. William Tulloch has suffered much inconvenience, and has been seriously obstructed in its progress, by the want of a suitable place of worship. They have now concluded the purchase and entered upon possession of a neat, comfortable, and commodious chapel in Duncan Street, Newington, built about twenty-four years ago, by two ladies—at an expense, including ground-rent, of £3,000—for the late Rev. James Clark, and capable of accommodating nearly 700 persons. The opening services commenced on Lord's day, April 10th, when the Rev. James Paterson, D.D., of Glasgow, preached morning and evening, and the Rev. William Lindsay Alexander, D.D., in the afternoon. On Lord's day, April 17th, the Rev. T. W. Medhurst, of Glasgow, preached morning and evening, and the Rev. James Robertson, of Newington United Presbyterian Church, in the afternoon. On the following evening a social meeting was held in the chapel, presided over by the pastor; when the Revs. T. W. Medhurst and James Robertson; the Rev. James Pirie, Free Church; the Rev. Ninian Wright, Congregational; the Revs. James E. Dovey, Francis Johnston, and Daniel Kemp, Baptist; Frederick Naylor, Esq., &c., delivered able, interesting, and appropriate addresses. The price at which the chapel has been acquired, with the adjoining spacious premises, in which a flourishing school is conducted, is £1,700.

GOSPEL OAK FIELDS, LONDON.—The services of this church were removed on Sunday, April 17th, from the temporary chapel to the New Temperance Hall lately erected in Winchester Street, Malden Road, and designated Albert Hall. The Rev. W. Trotman, of Blackmore, Essex, preached in the morning and evening, and the Rev. J. Pells, of Soho chapel, Oxford Street, in the afternoon. On Tuesday evening, the 19th, a public meeting was held to commemorate the entrance of the church and congregation into their new place of worship. Tea was provided in the school-room attached to the hall. The meeting, which was held in the body of the hall, was commenced by singing and prayer. Mr. Wilkin, who occupied the chair, briefly traced the rise and progress of the cause, showing the great necessity there was for the promulgation of the Gospel in the large and rapidly increasing neighbourhood. The report of the Sunday school was presented by Mr. Coles. Interesting and encouraging addresses were delivered by the Revs. Dr. Price, of Aberdare; E. Parker, of Farsley, Yorkshire; J. Stock, of Devonport; W. Norton, of Egham; C. Woollacott, and W. Trotman. On Sunday, April 24th, two admirable sermons were preached by the Rev. David Wassell, of Bath. The attendance at all the services was good, and a strong sense of obligation was felt to the various friends who had gratuitously, and in some instances at considerable inconvenience, helped this little cause in this new stage of its history.

PORTADOWN, IRELAND.—Opening services in connection with the Baptist church at Portadown, were conducted on Sunday, April 24, by the Rev. R. H. Carson, Tubbermore, and the Rev. W. Eccles, Banbridge. Owing to a sudden and unexpected attack of indisposition, Mr. Carson was only able to conduct the introductory exercises. Mr. Eccles preached two powerful sermons, characterized by all the force of former years. The attendance at both services were so large that many were unable to obtain admission. Since the settlement of the present pastor—the Rev. John Douglas—in August last, the church, assisted by Christian friends of other denominations, has fitted up most tastefully a comfortable meeting-house. On Monday evening, April 25th, a *soirée*, in compliment to the pastor, was held, at which about 200 persons were present. The Rev. R. H. Carson presided. Mr. Wilson, as the representative of the church, gave a statement of the history and progress of the Baptist cause in Portadown. Able and interesting addresses were delivered by Master Eccles, the Rev. John Taylor, of Tandragee, and the Rev. Mr. Young. Mr. J. H. Mulligan, on behalf of the church, read a highly complimentary address to Mr. Douglas, accompanied with the gift of six volumes of the works of the late celebrated Dr. Alexander Carson, of Tubbermore.

CINDERFORD, FOREST OF DEAN.—The anniversary services of the Baptist chapel, Cinderford, were held May 15th and 16th. On Lord's day, the 15th, two sermons were preached by the Rev. T. Reeves, of Risca, Monmouthshire. The chapel was well filled, and the collections amounted to £21. On Monday afternoon upwards of three hundred persons took tea in the school-room. In the evening a public meeting was held in the chapel, the Rev. P. Press, pastor of the church, in the chair. A financial statement was presented by Mr. W. Rhodes, one of the deacons of the church, and treasurer of the chapel fund, and addresses were delivered by the chairman; the Revs. T. French, of Hereford; H. Phillips, of Longhope; R. Stephens, of Ryeford; T. Reeves, of Risca; T. Clark, of Wesley Chapel, Cinderford; M. S. Ridley, of Lydney; and Mr. Thomas Nicholson, of Lydney. The contributions received during the year in aid of the fund for liquidating the chapel debt, including the collections at the anniversary services, and the produce of the tea-meeting, amounted to the sum of £325. A similar effort will be made in the next twelve months, and it is hoped that friends at a distance will assist in clearing off another £300 by Whitsuntide, 1865.

TRURO.—On Friday evening, April 22nd, the church and congregation meeting at River Street, Truro, under the pastoral care of the Rev. J. Lewis, invited him to a public tea-meeting previous to his departure from them, in order to testify their esteem and regard for him and their appreciation of his ministry by presenting him with a purse of gold accompanied with an affectionate address. The school-room was well filled on the occasion, many connected with other congregations in the town being present. The Rev. J. Bonser, B.A. (Independent), was requested to preside over the meeting and present the testimonial, which he very kindly consented to do, and took the opportunity at the beginning to express his own feelings of very warm attachment to Mr. Lewis, and his deep regret that the fraternal intercourse which had been so pleasant was now to be interrupted. Kindred feelings and sentiments were expressed by the Rev. J. Hocken (Bible Christian), and the Rev. J. Ambler (Methodist Free Church). Other friends

having addressed the meeting, it was brought to a close by the pastor, who acknowledged the kindness and sympathy shown him in appropriate and feeling words.

ANSTRUTHER, FIFESHIRE.—The services in connection with the settlement of the Rev. James Stuart as pastor of the Baptist church in this place, were held on Wednesday, May 4. In the morning, the devotional exercises were conducted by the former minister of the church, the Rev. J. C. Brown, of Perth. The Rev. Richard Glover, of Glasgow, preached an appropriate sermon on "The Everlasting Gospel." An impressive charge to minister and people was delivered by the Rev. Jonathan Watson, of Edinburgh. Mr. James Fowler, the senior deacon of the church, then stated that the call to Mr. Stuart was cordial and unanimous, and in reply Mr. Stuart declared his hearty acceptance of it. The Rev. J. Watson offered the ordination prayer, and the service was closed by singing and the benediction. In the evening, a fruit *soirée* was held, at which Mr. Stuart presided. Suitable addresses were delivered by the Revs. Messrs. Brown, Glover, Watson; Haig, of Kirkcaldy; Longwell, of Elie; Mr. Williams, of Glasgow University College; and Mr. Patterson, of St. Andrews. The services throughout were of an impressive and instructive character, and were well attended.

EWIAS HAROLD, HEREFORDSHIRE.—On Monday, April 11th, the foundation-stone of the Baptist chapel which is about to be built in this village was laid. At eleven o'clock the friends gathered to hear a powerful discourse by the Rev. J. Bullock, M.A., of Abergavenny. Mr. T. Pearce, of Snodhill Farm, then in a most suitable manner laid the foundation-stone. An address was afterwards delivered by the Rev. R. Johns, of Llanwenarth. A tea-meeting was held in the evening. Between 200 and 300 were present at the public meeting. The Rev. C. Burleigh, of Orcop, was called to occupy the chair. The Rev. T. French, of Hereford, was called upon to address the meeting on "Christian sympathy"; the Rev. E. Sinclair, of Peterchurch, on "Christ as the Christian's model"; the Rev. E. Compton, of Llanvihangel, on "Earnestness in the church"; the Rev. J. Beard, of Garway, on "The importance of yielding at once the heart to Christ." The Rev. T. Williams also spoke.

MANORBIER, PEMBROKESHIRE. — On Tuesday, April 19th, Mr. T. Pryce, of Haverfordwest College, was publicly recognised as pastor of the churches at Manorbier and Cold Inn, in the neighbourhood of Tenby. A large number of ministers and friends assembled on the occasion. The service was introduced by the Rev. J. Griffiths (Independent), St. Florence; a discourse on the nature of a Christian church was delivered by the Rev. E. Davies, of Pembroke-dock; the Rev. M. Morgan, of New Wells, Montgomeryshire, asked the questions; and the Rev. H. J. Morgan, Pembroke Dock, offered the ordination prayer. The charges to the pastor and the churches were delivered by the Revs. T. Davies, D.D., and T. Burditt, M.A., of Haverfordwest. The Revs. D. Davies, Pembroke; B. Havard, Saundersfoot; J. Williams, B.A., Narberth; and M. Morgan, New Wells, preached at the other services. The proceedings were altogether of a highly interesting character.

THETFORD, NORFOLK.—A new Baptist chapel was opened in this town, on Tuesday, April 5th, when the Revs. George Gould, of Norwich, and John Keed, of Cambridge, preached suitable and effective sermons. The Revs. J. Sage, of Kenninghall; J. P. Lewis, of Diss; and W. Lloyd, of Barton Mills, united in the services, which were interesting and well attended. On the following Sabbath, April 10th, the Rev. C. Elven, of Bury, continued the opening services by preaching thrice. The Baptist denomination had been unrepresented in this borough till some five years ago, when the Suffolk Union commenced an effort to extend the kingdom of Christ there. The chapel at Thetford is the fourth which the Suffolk Mission has been the means of erecting during its brief existence, and it assists in sustaining the ministry in seven important stations.

LYDNEY, GLOUCESTERSHIRE. — During the last few weeks increased accommodation has been made in the Baptist chapel, Lydney, by the erection of a substantial and commodious gallery. The alterations having been completed, the re-opening of the chapel took place on Sunday, May 8th, when the Rev. G. P. Evans, of Swansea, preached morning and evening. On Monday, the 9th, a public tea-meeting was held, when upwards of 260 friends partook of tea. After the tea, a public meeting was held, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. M. S. Ridley, pastor; Thos. Jones, of Chepstow; — Stanbury, Primitive Methodist; Mr. Thomas Nicholson, of Lydney; Revs. P. Prees, of Cinderford; — Stratford, of St. Briavels; and William Nicholson, of Park End. Through the liberal contributions of many friends, the cost of the alterations has been entirely defrayed.

LONG EATON, DERBYSHIRE.—On Monday, May 2nd, the foundation-stone of a new Baptist chapel was laid about a mile from the Trent Station, by R. Birkin, Esq., Nottingham, one of the directors of the Midland Railway. In addition to the villagers, many friends from the neighbourhood were present. Prayers were offered by the Revs. E. Stevenson, Loughborough, and H. Hunter, Nottingham, and a brief address was delivered by the Rev. W. Underwood, president of Chilwell College. In the evening, after a public tea, a meeting was held in the room hitherto used for worship, at which R. Birkin, Esq., presided, when addresses were delivered by the Revs. H. Hunter, E. Stevenson, J. Lewitt, W. Underwood, and several of the students at Chilwell College.

BEDLINGTON.—On Saturday evening, April 30th, the members of the Baptist church and other friends met to take tea together in the Wesleyan chapel, and hold a public meeting for the purpose of presenting Mr. Samuel Briggs, pastor of the Baptist church, with a gold watch and appendages of the value of £20, on his leaving Bedlington, to testify their appreciation of his gratuitous services amongst them for many years. The presentation on behalf of the church was made by the Rev. E. G. Call, Presbyterian minister, to which Mr. Briggs responded in a very feeling manner. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. Hudson and Postgate, and after a very interesting meeting, the assembly separated, highly gratified with the proceedings.

PUTNEY.—On Tuesday evening, April 19th, a social tea-meeting was given by the friends connected with the above church, for the purpose of welcoming their newly-elected pastor, the Rev. J. T. Gale. At the public meeting, held after tea, the chair was taken by J. Hardcastle, Esq., and interesting and appropriate addresses were delivered by the pastor, the Revs. Dr. Angus, J. M. Soule, J. Burns, of Kingston, J. W. Genders, of Wandsworth, D. Jones, B.A., of Brixton, S. G. Green, B.A., W. H. Tetley, of Rawdon College, J. Gurney, Esq., and D. King, Esq.

HARROW.—The foundation-stone of the new Baptist chapel, Harrow, was laid on Saturday, April 16th, by Sir S. Morton Peto, Bart., M.P. After the Rev. C. Bailhache had read the Scriptures and prayed, the pastor gave a deeply-interesting sketch of the history of the church, and the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon delivered an excellent address, as did also the Rev. Dr. Steane. The Rev. W. W. Evans, the Rev. Joseph Simpson, of Edgeware, the Rev. W. Fisk, of Chipperfield, and other ministers and friends, took part in the service.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES.—The Rev. R. Davies has resigned the pastorate of the English Baptist church, Bethel Chapel, Maesteg, Glamorganshire, and terminated his labours there the second week in May.—Mr. W. H. Knight, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle College, has accepted the pastorate of the Baptist church, Madeley, Salop.—Mr. T. G. Hughes, of the Metropolitan Tabernacle College, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the Baptist church, Woodstock, Oxon, to become its pastor.—Mr. B. D. John, of Haverfordwest College, has accepted a cordial invitation to become the pastor of the church at St. Mellons, Monmouthshire. He purposes entering upon his pastoral labours the first Sunday in June.—Mr. John Harris, student from Haverfordwest College, has accepted a unanimous invitation to become the pastor of the Baptist churches at Molleston and Myrtletwy, Pembrokeshire, and commenced his labours the third Sunday in May.—Mr. Seth V. Lewis has resigned his ministry at Cothill and Fyfield after twenty-three years' service, having accepted an invitation to be minister of Drayton Chapel, and afternoon preacher at the Baptist chapel, Ock Street, Abingdon.—The Rev. J. Dore has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church, Pontesbury, and removed from the neighbourhood. The church is in too low a state to support another pastor for some time to come.—The Rev. T. E. Fuller has resigned his pastorate of the church at Wellington Street, Luton, to the great regret of the people of his charge; the state of Mrs. Fuller's health rendering a change of climate imperative. Mr. Fuller has accepted an appointment to the editorship of *The Cape Argus*, and will embark by the mail-steamer early in June.—The Rev. W. G. Lewis has resigned the pastorate of the church meeting in Salem Chapel, Clemence Parade, Cheltenham.—The Rev. John R. S. Harrington (late of Bristol College) has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church in Ross. Mr. Harrington, having embraced Pædobaptist views, is about to seek the charge of a Congregational church.—The Rev. Charles White, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire (late of Haverfordwest Baptist College), has accepted an invitation to become the minister of the English Baptist church, High Street, Merthyr Tydvil, and will commence his labours there on the second Sunday in July.—The Rev. Ebenezer Edwards, late of Pillgwenlly, Newport, having accepted the pastoral charge of the promising church recently organised at New Milford, Pembroke, entered upon his

duties on the third Lord's day in May.—The Rev. John Harper, of Rawdon College, having accepted a unanimous invitation from the Baptist church, Horsforth, Leeds, will commence his labours there at the close of the present college session.—Mr. G. Stevens, having received a unanimous invitation to the pastorate of the church in Church Street, Stoke Newington, has accepted the invitation, and commenced his labours on Sunday, May 1st.—The Rev. W. Jeffrey has resigned the pastorate of the Baptist church, Great Torrington, Devon, and has accepted the unanimous and very cordial invitation to the pastorate of the church and congregation assembling in the Baptist chapel, Penknap, Westbury, Wilts, intending to commence his labours there at Midsummer.—The Rev. S. C. Burn, of the Baptist College, Bristol, has accepted the unanimous invitation of the church meeting at Hope Chapel, Canton, Cardiff.—The Rev. J. Mountford, late of Sevenoaks, has accepted a unanimous call to the pastorate of the church worshipping in Ebenezer Chapel, Leighton Buzzard, with encouraging prospects of usefulness.

GENERAL.

THE LATE J. KERSHAW, ESQ., M.P., AND SUNDAY SCHOOL INSTRUCTION.—At the meeting of the Sunday School Union, in London, last month, the Rev. F. Tucker said:—"The other day Mr. Watson told me of the departure of an old friend of Sunday schools, James Kershaw, Esq., M.P. for Stockport. When I tell you," said Mr. Tucker, "he was an old friend of Sunday schools, my story is very incomplete. Everything, under God, did James Kershaw owe to Sunday schools. He has told the story, I believe, in this hall; but Mr. Watson, whom Dr. Hugh Allen has inducted into episcopal orders this evening, wishes me to tell it again. Most of you, I dare say, have not heard it. When this gentleman was a lad of ten years of age he was in a class in a Sunday school in Manchester. The name of the president, or superintendent, of that school was Steele, a name very fragrant in the history of that great manufacturing and commercial town. James was a very troublesome boy in his class. The teacher came up with his name to the superintendent, and again and again said, 'I cannot do anything with him.' 'But,' said Mr. Steele, 'I am sure there is something in James, if one knew how to develop it.' Again and again came the complaint, and again and again did this kind-hearted superintendent set it aside. At last this little boy broke through one of the most stringent rules of the school, which involved exclusion; and when the next Sunday came the inquiry was, I believe, somewhat in this form, 'Who of you has been to the races during the past week?' None in this class, none in the next, none in the other, none in the fourth, none anywhere but James. 'Well,' said the teacher, 'you see the boy must go, Mr. Steele; it is no use; a diseased sheep will infect the flock.' 'But,' said the superintendent, 'I cannot part with that boy; let us have him up here in the presence of the whole school.' Up he came, a fine, daring, defiant, handsome little fellow, of ten years of age. All the school looked on, and the superintendent said, 'Now, James, I am sure, when you come to think of it, you are very sorry that you went to the races.' The little fellow shrugged his shoulders; he was not at all sorry. Then, just as one of you ladies would touch the keys of a piano, did the superintendent in his address try to touch the keys of that boy's heart, till at length he had produced some effect. Turning to the hundreds of boys in his presence, he said, 'My lads, if we turn James out of the school he will go to the bad, and become worse. Shall he go?' 'No, no, no,' shouted 300 voices, and James burst into tears, fairly conquered by affection, fairly won by love. What he became afterwards there are Manchester gentlemen on this platform who can tell you better than I. He became a member of Parliament; he became a deacon of a Christian church. His £100 a-year was always carefully paid into the London Missionary Society, and sixty guineas, as I know, to the Manchester City Mission; and I may also say, as I happened to have some pleasant acquaintance with him, that there were many things which his right hand did, which his left hand was not allowed to know. Now, he has gone; one of the brightest trophies of Sunday school instruction."

THE MAY MEETINGS.—At the meetings which have just been held the Church Missionary Society reported its year's income at £154,247, including about £20,000 raised in the missions themselves; the Wesleyan Missionary Society had received £134,258 in the year; the London (Congregationalist), £81,072; the Baptist, £34,419. The British and Foreign Bible Society received in the past year £89,897 for general purposes, in addition to £79,007 from sales of Bibles; the London Society for Promoting Christianity among the Jews, £32,680. These societies are entitled to the credit of having stood the test of time; the youngest of them, the Wesleyan Missionary Society, is now raising its jubilee special fund, which already amounts

to £170,000. Any one who could slide back some five-and-forty years would find these societies holding their meetings, Wilberforce a speaker, and a Prince of the Blood coming down to Freemasons' Hall on a May morning to a meeting of the Bible Society, which was a great favourite. At that time the society system had not been much applied to home objects; but since that day domestic "missions" and societies have sprung up, and some of them having hit a flagrant evil have risen to great prosperity. This May the Church Pastoral Aid Society has reported its year's income as £44,605; the London City Mission, £42,476; the Scripture Readers' Society, £11,193; the Army Scripture Readers', £9,477; the Home Missionary Society, £6,508. The Irish Church Missions, a society which adopts a plural title, has fought its way to an income of £26,672. This enumeration by no means exhausts the long list of "May Meetings." Indeed, there is a host of minor societies; the object of some is to undertake some special enterprise or cultivate some special field abroad or at home, and of others to cultivate it in a special manner; some have been established in aid of an idea, and some, perhaps, rather in aid of a person. There has also not been named in this list the venerable mother society—the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, whose income for the year is reported at £87,832, nor the Additional Curates Society, which has not yet held its meeting, but is stated to have received £26,119 in the year 1863.—*The Times.*

"CHURCH DISCIPLINE" IN IRELAND.—The following striking instance of extemporaneous church discipline is given in *The Cork Constitution*:—"On Ascension Thursday, which is a holy day with the Roman Catholics, a priest, on his way to say mass, met some of his flock with carts conveying three loads of copper from the wreck of the *Magpie* in the county Clare. He immediately jumped off his car or gig and collared the first driver, striking him in the throat with his clenched fist, and fiercely crying, 'Don't you know this is a holy day? Paddy, you ruffian, I have given you up as a bad case long ago.' The priest then turned to the second driver, and delivered a violent blow upon the nose. This man deprecatingly observed that he did not think it was a holy day of obligation, to which the pastor replied, 'D——d well you knew it was!' The third offender escaped the blow that was aimed at him by nimbly stooping and getting out of the way. He insisted that they should leave the carts, which were escorted by police, and go back with him to the chapel, shaking his fist at them, and stating that it would be a sore day's work for them. Two of the men obeyed the priest, and ran after him to mass. To the one that remained a gentleman present said, 'Paddy, I would advise you to summon the priest for assault.' To which Paddy answered, 'It would be as much as my life is worth if I did so; but I would do it if my passage was paid to America.'"

SEIZING BEDS FOR CHURCH-RATES.—The following extract from a private letter has been forwarded to us, as an illustration of the system which the Church Defence Associations have been called into existence to defend:—"Mr. Joseph Hulston, a small farmer in the parish of Hagley, the seat of Lord Lyttelton, who is very prominent in Church Defence Associations and whose brother is the rector, has just had two beds and a table taken from his house for a rate. What makes the thing more cruel is, two children were lying on one of the beds. Mrs. Hulston entreated that the children might not be disturbed, and that something else might be taken, either a cart or a cow, but not the beds. Her entreaties, however, were useless, and the beds, with the table, were carried off to a public-house, where, on the 25th ult., the beds were sold to the landlady,—not by auction, nor was any public notice given of the sale, except that on the Sunday the policeman told Hulston the sale would take place to-morrow. These beds were worth about £5; the landlady bought them for £2 15*s.* The rate was 15*s.*, and the table and 6*s.* 9*d.* were returned to the man, two of whose children had their beds taken from under them early on the morning of April 19th. Mr. Hulston is a Primitive Methodist, and a local preacher. He is zealously devoted to his Master's work, and before the world blameless."

THE HON. AND REV. BAPTIST W. NOEL AND THE AMERICAN BAPTISTS.—At a recent meeting of the Executive Committee of the Missionary Union in New York, on the motion of the Rev. Dr. Stow, it was unanimously voted:—"That the corresponding secretary do address a letter to the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, of London, expressive of the special satisfaction the executive committee would feel in seeing him at the approaching annual meeting, and assuring him of their conviction that his presence in this country would be greeted with pleasure by the many thousands here who have long admired his Christian character and labours, and also the intelligent interest he has manifested in the history and

bearings of our national struggle." The following is Mr. Noel's reply:—"Dear Sir,—Thanks for your kind invitation, which I am not able to accept. I am too old to travel. May your missions, your churches, and your country prosper! Give my thanks to the brethren who have been good enough to express the wish that I should come and see them. Not being able to have that pleasure, may I soon hear of another work of grace among you, which may convince the world that God is with you in your great national struggle, and that he will lead you on to greater prosperity. Believe me, dear sir, your affectionate brother in Christ, BAPTIST W. NOEL."

LORD BROUGHAM.—The venerable law reformer, Lord Brougham, has not yet taken his place in the House of Lords this session. I am in a position to state, on excellent authority, that his lordship's absence is occasioned by the fact that he is engaged upon an autobiography. I trust it will be long before it reaches the public eye. The noble lord is a frequent attendant at the Temple Church when in London, and I may mention a characteristic trait, which will hereafter be remembered by his friends with pleasure. He almost invariably makes a special request of the gentleman who has the arranging of the musical portion of the service that the hymn to be sung by the choir and the congregation shall be "Crown Him Lord of all." "Do let us have that hymn again, 'Crown Him Lord of all!'—'Crown Him Lord of all!' We shall hear it better sung one day, but it does one's heart good now." Here is greatness acknowledging the source of greatness—the mental giant, full of years and laden with honours, becoming as a little child.—*London Correspondent of The Dublin Express.*

THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.—A report has been very extensively circulated that Mr. Spurgeon will shortly leave his church and congregation for several months, to enable him to visit the Holy Land and various other places. On Sunday evening, May 22nd, the rev. gentleman, after alluding to the rumour, in the most unqualified manner contradicted the truth of it. He said that the time would come, perhaps, when he should require two or three months' relaxation, but certainly not this year. His object in thus publicly alluding to the subject just now was, that as there were many visitors to London at this season of the year who came to worship with his people, this announcement would set aside all doubt. He intended to be absent not more than one Sabbath at a time for some time to come.

SERMONS BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.—We shall probably render a service to many of our readers by directing their attention to an advertisement which appears in our columns, announcing the publication of a series of sermons by the distinguished American preacher who recently visited this country. We all know how he can fulminate from the platform; many will desire to know how he "fills" the pulpit. Messrs. Heaton and Son, the publishers of the series now announced, have responded to a general want in a way which cannot fail to command success.—*Manchester Examiner.*

Editorial Notes for the Month.

THE event of the month is, doubtless, the speech of Mr. Gladstone on Parliamentary Reform. Coming almost unexpectedly, and in a debate on a Bill which nobody expected would be carried, it has, we are told, caused the utmost consternation in the camp of both the Tory and the so-called Liberal foe; and, if we are not mistaken, it will exert a greater influence on the future political life of England, than anything that has occurred in the present Parliament. There is no wonder that the speech should have been a surprise to the adversaries of Reform. "Every man not permanently incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, is entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution." Such words from a Chancellor of the Exchequer, and from *such* a Chancellor as Mr. Gladstone, could not fail to cause both surprise and

alarm. The worst of all about Mr. Gladstone's words is, that *they are true*. "Ay, there's the rub!" It is plain that "the man" has come: he will not have to wait long for "the hour."

At the time we write, the Attorney-General's Bill for the Consolidation and Amendment of the Church-building and New Parishes Acts still stands for a second reading. We trust that the attention of our readers has been directed to this insidious measure. Its effect, if it be passed in its present form, will be to authorise the levying of a Church-rate in every one of the New Parishes already created, as well as in all those which may be formed in future years. Will the Dissenters of England submit to this? It is in direct opposition to the declared intention of Sir Robert Peel, when introducing the Church-building Act of 1828—to the action of the House of Commons in amending another Bill in 1850—and to the assurance of the present Home Secretary (whose name is on the back of the present Bill), that the Act, known as the Marquis of Blandford's, would not give the right of levying Church-rates. We can scarcely understand how honourable men can persist in such a measure under such circumstances. Perhaps, before this page appears, the Bill may have been modified by its authors. If not, we entreat our readers to be prepared for a struggle, than which there has been none more important for many years.

The Conference on the affairs of Denmark continues to sit. That is, it sits—*occasionally*. It met on the 17th of May,—it was not to meet again till the 28th. Little hope of an arrangement seems to be entertained. The views of Austria and Prussia are said to be entirely opposed to the views of Denmark and of the neutral powers. Meantime, the German powers are said to continue, notwithstanding the armistice, their depredations in Jutland; and everything points, only too plainly, to the probability of a further appeal to arms. If the war be resumed, will England be a party to it? From all that appears, the only thing that has prevented the English Government from going to war in favour of Denmark sooner, has been the determination of the Queen.

We have given, on another page, a fuller account than has ever appeared in any *monthly* periodical of the Annual Meetings. It will be seen that all the meetings were more than usually successful. The attendances were larger than in any former year. The speeches and the sermons were good, and the spirit which pervaded the meetings was more than ordinarily earnest and devout. If any of the meetings were more gratifying than others, they were those of the Baptist Union and of the Baptist Foreign Mission. The meetings of the latter were of course rendered all the more important by the severe struggle through which the Society has passed. *Nearly three thousand pounds* in hand, instead of eight thousand pounds in debt, is surely a result to call for both gratitude and gratification. The Baptist Union never had a meeting to be compared with that of the present year. We trust that the union which was manifested at the meeting, is only a promise of that union in the denomination which many of us so ardently desire.

THE

BAPTIST REPORTER.

JULY, 1864.

THE WANTS OF THE BAPTIST DENOMINATION.

In our January number, we invited our readers to consider our "position and capabilities" as a denomination, and attempted to show that our position was strong and our capabilities great, but that we were failing to take advantage of the one, and to use to the utmost the other. We have a deep conviction that, as a body, we are approaching a crisis in our history the issue of which it is not easy to see. If we arouse ourselves from our present lethargy, we shall be able to hold our own and take our place in the aggressive movement of the age; but our present policy, or want of policy, will place us still further in the background of other religious bodies, and consign us to obscurity and contempt. Let us not, through a vain self-love, refuse to probe our weak places, and ascertain the reformations indispensable to our growth and strength.

Even a limited acquaintance with the working of our church system will reveal the lamentable tendency there is to the sub-division of our strength and the multiplication of small churches. Almost in every town, and indeed in every village, instances could be cited of petty quarrels breaking up a church, not over strong, into two, and a seceding party going off to build its *Zoar* or *Cave of Adullam*. They may be only a score of people, of little intelligence; they build a chapel, for which they have no means of paying; a cheap minister is appointed, at a salary of fifty pounds a year; a ministry and worship are instituted acceptable neither to God nor man; and the place becomes a scandal to the denomination, and a byeword to the neighbourhood. The parent church has been weakened by the secession in its financial resources and crippled in its operations; and the spectacle is presented of two weak churches instead of one strong one; un-Christian jealousies are fostered between them, and a long injury is inflicted upon the cause of Christianity in the town. *Can* this be right? Can the system that produces and permits it be Christian? Ought there not to be some judicial court of appeal where disputes might be settled and divisions prevented? This license of division and sub-division is self-destructive. A worm cut into two still lives in its separate

parts; but if we go on dividing it into still smaller sections it will perish. Modern Presbyterianism may not be the remedy; but the Presbyterianism of the primitive church, which affiliated all the congregations of one town, under the government of one body known as *the Church*, is a remedy obvious, authoritative, and scriptural. One radical, indispensable want, therefore, is *a reform in church organisation*. We want agglomeration, not division; union, and not separation.

The Independents are complaining of the same evil as that which we lament, and are beginning to ask for some modification of Congregationalism which shall not curtail the true liberties of the church. Let us not be afraid boldly to look into this question: the interests of the church are imperiled if we refuse to entertain it. The circumstances of the times loudly call for a thorough consideration of it. The present constitution of our churches sprang out of our history; was dictated by the circumstances of the past in times of persecution; but now that we no longer worship in fear of the civil power, it is high time to inquire whether we cannot bring our church system into a more entire agreement with the primitive and scriptural model, so as to make it work with a diviner harmony and a more beneficent influence. *At least*, the question needs discussion, and for that purpose we have raised it here.

Church economics, or the financial system of our churches, is another question which indicates one of our great wants. We have discussed the deepest questions in theology; we have protested against infant baptism; we have denounced the practice of State endowment of religion, and have contended earnestly for the voluntary principle; but we have never explained what the voluntary principle is, nor got it adopted by the bulk of our people. The minister is delicate in speaking of the law of Christian giving, for fear of being suspected of a sinister purpose; and the laity have been quite content to let the topic lie neglected. The consequence is that, *as a rule*, our ministers are worse paid than any other class of the community except curates; our societies are crippled in their work, and a vast amount of money consumed in that anomalous agency known as *deputation* work. Now, the voluntary principle does not mean, as too many people think, the liberty to give or not to give, according to the option of each person; nor does it mean capricious or niggardly giving, according to the varying impulse of a covetous heart. The New Testament exposition of the idea is that a Christian man is to give, not by the compulsion of an outward human law, but from the inward power of a divine love shed abroad in the heart, and that this love is to interpret the extent of his ability to support the work of Christ in the world.

We have but to look at the present method of finance amongst us, to feel assured that before we can greatly prosper a more uniform, constant, business-like, and Christian plan must be adopted. Pew rents, in so far as they are a tax levied at a uniform rate upon the man of one hundred and upon the man of six hundred a year, are a blunder equally irrational and un-Christian; but if each pew-holder were asked, as he is in some places, to tax himself for the rent of his seat according to his ability, the income of a church would be largely increased, and the plan of seat-letting would

be brought into strict harmony with Christian voluntaryism. If this method were found insufficient to meet the demands of the church for its necessary funds, the plan of *weekly offering* might be added. But the weekly offering breaks down mostly for want of system. If it be left to the caprice of the contributors, most likely the offering will not be weekly, but only as often as they attend upon public worship, and the sum at which they tax themselves is almost sure to be far beneath their ability. But if every person who joins a church were kindly asked how much he could with a clear conscience give weekly to the funds of the church, and envelopes for the quarter put into his hands, a regular and usually a plentiful source of income would be established, which in most cases would suffice for minister's salary, current expenses, and the claims of philanthropy. As it is—with our present want of system—what is given is insufficient to supply the treasury of the church, and the deficiency has to be made up by incessant appeals for subscriptions and collections. "The penny a week and shilling a quarter" of the Wesleyans answers, we believe, admirably, and entitles them to the praise of being clever financiers; but there is this slight drawback to the system, that it is not *Christian*. It is an inexorable law, which the poorest cannot escape; whereas the Christian plan is to train the conscience and heart of every one "to give according as God has prospered him." Let us, then, get the weekly offering adopted in all our churches, and we shall become suddenly rich and prosperous—financially and spiritually.

It must be admitted, again, that another *great* want of our body is some true theory worked into practice of *Church oversight and superintendence*. Many ministers of large churches in our great cities are only preachers, and not pastors. And, remembering how much work is claimed from them extra to the work of preaching, we do not see what time is left them for the exercise of the pastoral function. In very large churches—such, for instance, as Mr. Spurgeon's—the difficulty is overcome by the appointment of a body of lay members to take the oversight of districts assigned to one or more of the elders and deacons. In this manner a superintendence is exercised, more or less efficiently, over a body of some two thousand members. But this is an exceptional case. There are many ministers, with churches varying from three to five hundred members, who, from various causes, find it impossible to keep up habits of pastoral oversight, and who have no organization of lay visitors as the substitute for their personal supervision. The clergy of the Church of England are able mostly to command a staff of curates, Scripture readers, and district visitors, which secures constant communication not only with the members of their congregations, but with a promiscuous multitude of Dissenters as well. The Wesleyans have their class-leaders, who perform analogous functions. The people are seen to and looked after in some manner or other. But our ministers have to go from home for various societies amongst us, to preach anniversary sermons, to deliver lectures, to attend no end of committee meetings, to make speeches upon platforms in their own towns for all manner of benevolent and philanthropic societies, and to write articles for magazines and religious periodicals. Others, again,

in more retired spheres, have no taste for pastoral visitation, and denounce the idea of it as a mere round of gossiping which answers no spiritual end, and leaves insufficient time for study and pulpit preparation.

The success of those churches where pastoral oversight is exercised to any extent, is so marked as to convince us that it is not a question for debate. If we are to have a large increase of prosperity, one contributing cause will be the closer contact of the minister with the church and congregation. Amongst all men of serious purpose bent upon the salvation of those who hear them, it is quite time that the fallacies on this subject were exploded. Here are some plain matters of fact, which no dislike of the drudgery of pastoral visitation will ever be able to set aside: that it is a perfectly natural and reasonable thing that he who preaches to a congregation should know something of their characters and peculiar circumstances as necessary to the *adaptedness* of his ministry; that it is necessary there should be an affectionate relation between him and those to whom he preaches, and that this is brought about by kindly intercourse; that a word privately spoken in reference to some special case has a thousandfold the power of a general utterance in the pulpit; that many persons needing advice and consolation can be reached only by means of the kindly relation of pastor and people; and that this friendly intimacy is of especial value to the younger members of families. Many other things of this kind might be adduced as illustrations of the service to be rendered to the church by the cordial intercourse of ministers and their congregations; and we are satisfied that it would greatly help to give reality, earnestness, and practical power to a man's ministry; and, if he knows how to husband and appropriate his time, would leave him plenty of space for diligent preparation for the pulpit. The preacher is undoubtedly first, and the pastor second; but the model minister is he who can blend the two in happy proportions. If any part of a minister's work is to be given up, rather let a few committees, or anniversary sermons and lectures, be sacrificed, than the work of caring for his own church.

We might lengthen the catalogue of our "Wants." Every intelligent observer laments the "want" of *a greater number of thoroughly-educated and well-disciplined men in our ministry.* As *The Times* truly said the other day, in speaking of the training given by the Theological Colleges of the Church of England, that the study of theology required a good previous training in philology and philosophy—which is the University method. But the majority by far of the ministers who leave our colleges have had a four years' course, in which the study of classics, philosophy, and theology has been pursued simultaneously; and consequently each branch has been mastered imperfectly, for want of sufficient time and the natural order of study. But this is too extensive a question to be unfolded here and now. But it leads us to ask how many amongst us understand the sceptical arguments and criticisms of the day, and are competent to grapple with and refute them? How many see the extent to which science is parting company with faith? and how many, by their understanding of the rupture, are entitled to rebuke the hasty inductions of the one, and to state with intelligence the grounds and claims of the other?

It is pitiful to hear the ignorant denunciations launched by raw college lads against the learning and science of those who have left the ranks of the orthodox. This must be altered, or we shall be laughed to scorn.

Much might also be said in regard to our "Wants" in the work of education. *Our Sunday schools are still very defective.* We want more intelligence, a better knowledge of the Bible, and greater skill in teaching. We want to support British and Dissenting schools more extensively, and to emulate the zeal of the clergy in the work of moulding the minds of the young. But we have exhausted our space, and can say no more.

THE CHRISTIAN HERO.

ANOTHER REMINISCENCE OF THE INSURRECTION IN JAMAICA.*

"Stand on the pile, immortal fame,
Broad stars adorn thy brightest robe:
Thy thousand voices sound his name
In silver accents round the globe.

"Flattery shall faint beneath the sound,
While hoary truth inspires the song:
Envy grow pale and bite the ground,
And slander gnaw her forky tongue."

WHILST Slavery triumphed in imaginary security, certain insignificant events succeeded each other, which, unnoticed and unknown, were secretly sapping the very fortress of her power. A negro boy obtained employment in a printing-office in Montego Bay; and when his naked and noiseless feet first pressed those boards, the doom of slavery was sealed. This lad had an uncle, a deacon in the Baptist church, who, being able to read, watched for opportunities of adding to his little store of information. Some English newspapers were there from time to time carelessly thrown away, some of which were carried by the lad to his uncle. Though a Christian man and a down-trodden slave, the eyes of Sam Sharp flashed as with lightning when first he read "anti-slavery" intelligence from England. "Hi!" he exclaimed, "we hab friend in England!" Now his thoughts took wing. His spirit panted for a glorious flight, but there were cruel ties which bound it down. The precious paper was stored away, to be read again and yet again. To his eager mind this was a lens to enlarge the outlines and develop the beauties of a truth scarce known before. As time rolled on, and other papers came with those talismanic words therein, he seems with these to have framed a telescope with which to scan the unknown heavens. Even the thoughts and passions of the British senate crossed the Atlantic to thrill the heart of that poor slave. Tidings followed tidings; but softly through the channels of his thought the mystery stole along. Wonder crowded upon wonder. The dungeon of his soul had now become roofless, and there were dark but starry heavens above. The surrounding walls were immeasurably high,—immensely thick,—impregnable. Sam called a council of his friends and committed to them his thoughts. Now he was oft in reverie by day, and oft in dreams by night. Secret converse began amongst the people. Now there were low whispers,—then eager gesticulations,—then all was still.

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* By a Returned Missionary.

But the stone which dropped so noiselessly from on high into the quiet lake threw abroad upon its bosom those concentric rings which were destined to increase at once in multitude and in power. A secret society was formed, with both "the power" and the passion "to add to its number." The main idea was innocent enough. No conscience was stung. Few hearts quailed. "Look!" said they, "black is more than white. If we say *We no work* if you *no pay*, that is right; and white people is not enough to make we." Soon this thought ran like wildfire. Every act of cruelty and wrong, every real or imaginary grievance, blew upon it to speed its way. But the Christian man, with intensely Christian principles and thoughts, could not limit his plans to Christian minds. The consequences of this he had not calculated. All characters gathered round the standard which fluttered such magnificent thoughts, and fanned the scattered embers of affection into renovated fire. Come they must, and come they would. Electric sparks travelled far and wide, and minds long paralysed caught life and power.

At length it happened that one rose to differ from all his brethren. Reasoning that if the whites were few, they had guns to fight, he cried, "Oonoo, all fool! Buckra no make we go free so! Me say we is to hab *sword* and *gun*, and fight for we free!" "Hear him, hear him!" exclaimed a number of voices all at once. But Sam Sharp listened with dismay. Afresh he asserted the principle with which he began. "No, my dear broder; me no 'gree to dat word. We no want for fight. De Bible say we is no to fight. Beside, dare is no 'casion. We hab no more nor for all to say, We no work if you no pay, and dem can't make we."

It was, however, of little avail. An evil spirit was raised. He who had designed only good, now beheld the horrors of overwhelming ill. Some, indeed, clung to him; but the turmoil of thought soon gathered black and threatening storm-clouds in that starry concave of anticipated liberty which had filled him with such bliss. He had watched for a calm and glittering dawn of day; but instead of this a deeper blackness piled itself up into the eastern sky. Think not his was a coward heart! He could do far more than fight,—he could suffer for liberty, for liberty could die. The passion burned only in the fire of holy principles, and on God's altar. You cannot sever them. They brighten and burn in equal brilliancy and in immortal flames. Lo, there they blend in such unison, that although perplexed, Sam cannot recede. He knows not what to do. To abandon his position would be utterly to let loose the passion for bloodshed which he beholds arising. He may yet, by calm reasoning, overcome; and so resolves to remain, although for the present he cannot command.

The plan declared was instinct with life and power which no one could now control. The parishes of St. James, Trelawney, St. Elizabeth's, Westmoreland, and Hanover, were quivering with repressed excitement. Multitudes had taken the secret oath. Multitudes more were anxious to do so. Yet, strange to say, the secret was well kept.

Whilst affairs thus progressed, having been in actual operation from the month of September, 1831, it was about the 24th of December when a negress at Salt Spring Estate was seized and flogged for some real or fancied fault. Her infuriated husband rushed upon her assailant with a blow, exclaiming that "his wife should never be flogged any more." In a moment all was uproar,—panic,—confusion. No one would seize the rebel. Then it was reported that a messenger was sent to Montego Bay for armed assistance. At once the people fled. That night upon the hill a flame arose. Soon it burned more and yet more high. The red light seemed to mingle with the skies. The concerted signal received, ere long, an answer. Yonder a similar beacon-light

was flaming. Then another rose; and farther yet, behold another. The insurrection was precipitated. Few, if any, were really ready. Nevertheless on the following day many hundreds had espoused the revolt. Now began scenes of violence and wrong. Devastation, robbery, fire, bloodshed, and most brutal violence, succeeded in all their forms. The ignorant and ungovernable had no idea of Sam Sharp's peaceful and holy protest. In their ignorance and debasement they dreamed of success only through the aid of terrible and most iniquitous deeds. Some, therefore, remained faithful to their masters, and disdained to accept of a freedom so obtained. Many were mere cowards, in whose breasts no generous thought could live.

Yet many there were bent upon securing liberty at whatever cost, though their resources were sadly deficient, and their inexperience and simplicity sometimes grossly ridiculous. "Minister," said my attendant when I was riding on one occasion in the parish of St. James, long after these events had passed, "it is bery true what you say. We all know it tro' de Gospel we get free, and we always tank God for it; but same time, if we no fight for it we no get it dough."

"Pretty fighting," I answered; "by all accounts you made as much noise as you could, and both sides took great care to keep out of harm's way. But most of the mischief was done in this neighbourhood, was it not?"

"Yes, minister," said he; "*Reading Hill* was de place. Dem fight *dere* for true. Many poor fellow get kill in de wood. Ah! 'twas dreadful work dere. You see de 'rebel,' as dey call dem, no know noting, only dem always generally hab plenty courage sometimes. De *white* men all de coward, minister. Why, dere is Mr. H——, now, in Montego Bay, him was officer in de militia; when him hear de 'rebels' is coming, him run away into de estate and *hide in de Stoke-hole*. Don't dem call him now, 'SANDY STOKE-HOLE'? Till him dead dey neber forget dat word!" After indulging a hearty laugh at this gentleman's expense, he proceeded, "It bery true—black man no know for fight, but same time de buckra is all de coward. One time, you see, minister, de soldier is all for come to dis estate. Well, de rebel hear 'bout it; so hundreds come down here to dis same place. Den half go *dis* side, and half go *dis* side. All along *here* dem lay down softly, softly, behind de wall. De rest do de same behind *dat* wall. Dem wait long time. By and bye de soldier is come—march! march!—march! Dey all keep down 'pon de ground, so let dem come in between. Den de rebel dem all jump up and hallo, and fire, and *so!*" (clapping his hands sharply together) "all de buckra soldier run away!—run! neber stop till dem come into de estate!"

"What!" I exclaimed, "ran away and left all the killed and wounded behind?"

"No, minister, because you see dere wasn't any."

"What! caught between two fires, and no one killed!"

"No, sir, none at all! No blood on de ground—not a drop! No more nor dem all frighten and *run!* You see dem poor foolish bwoy neber know 'bout gun. Gun is gun—dat is all. Ha! why de morest part of dem neber load gun in dem life, and dey tink say, '*If* de ball for *come out first*, why, in course, de ball for *go in first*. So dey put in de ball, and den de powder 'pon top of it; so de guns no go off at all! But de soldier neber know 'bout dat. Dem is all frighten and run away!"

Still, allowing the uselessness of the conflict in other respects, his firm conviction was, that it had drawn the sympathies of British Christians around them, inasmuch as it had served to arouse their attention; and he concluded as he had begun, "De Gospel give we de free; but if we didn't fight we neber get it dough."

Another illustration of far different character proved how strong was the hold which the idea of liberty had taken upon the common mind. In the yard of one of the estates in the same parish the military were drawn out, probably but for exercise, or because their presence was thought necessary to repress symptoms of revolt; when a woman rushed past them in the direction of the Trash House,* waving frantically above her head a flaming brand, crying as she ran, "*I know I shall die for it!—I know I shall die for it!—but my children shall be free!*" She succeeded in igniting the inflammable mass, but the soldiers were ordered to fire, and she fell LIFELESS.

But where was the holy man? What part now could the Christian play? Does he still hold fast his integrity? Can his garments be always white? Who would wonder if even Sharp were betrayed to an erroneous course? But is it so? Come and see.

He has gathered the adherents to his own principle around him. They have conceded this, that they "will not fight nor do any harm, unless they are first attacked, and then they must defend themselves." Sam, too, has apparently conceded thus much to them, under the mere force of present circumstances, feeling that his aim has been frustrated by foolish and wicked men. But mark! he can take no part *with* them. He will take no arms of any kind. He simply dwells in their midst to counsel, to restrain, and to bless. Every morning and evening the whole are assembled, as he terms it, for "family prayer." So well-known were all his motions amongst the white party, that with them he had the honourable nickname of "The High-priest in the camp."

Whilst thus striving at Greenwich Hill to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man, a report reaches the hero that the missionaries are imprisoned, and are about to be put to death for inciting the revolt. Great pains, indeed, were taken to satisfy the people that some of them had already been executed. Alas, now, for Sam's peace of mind! None but God can tell his grief. None but God bears witness to his tears and prayers. How many hours of soul-harrowing suspense he suffers we cannot say; but ere nightfall his resolution is taken, though deeply buried in the secresy of his breast. If any of the missionaries live, he will yet save their lives. If any are dead, he will save their reputation. Alone he walks the long and winding ways to Montego Bay. The darkness favours him. Undiscovered he reaches his brother's cottage. Softly rapping on the shutter, William Sharp cries out, "Who dat?" In suppressed voice the answer comes, "Me!—Sam!—me want you." Vainly now does William urge his flight, and assure him he will be *killed*. Sam is immovable. William must precede him to his old master, and obtain for him an introduction. Thus they go: "the brother delivers up the brother to death." Look down, ye angels from above! Rejoice, ye martyr-spirits, at a saint bright like yourselves! Sam sees his master and declares, "Massa, me is come to give up myself; because dey say, de ministers make up de rebellion, and dey never did,—but only me, Sam Sharp; me do it all." His heart, thus far relieved, he has more peace in his dungeon that night than he had known for many weeks. The sweet calm of heaven, the smile of God, the dear consciousness of right, sanctify to him those hard boards and heavy bonds.

On the morrow, the town and country too were filled with wonder. Knibb, in confinement, heard the astounding tale. As soon as possible he demanded permission to confront Sam Sharp in the presence of witnesses. Securing this, these nobles of humanity and of God, with all the ensigns of earth's dishonour round them, stood face to face. And they were true lovers to the death.

* A building open at the sides, in which the dried cane, after the sugar has been expressed, is reserved for fuel until the next crop.

"Sam," said Knibb, "it is currently reported that the missionaries have caused this rebellion. I am now come to ask you solemnly, in the sight of God, and I charge you to answer truly, as you shall give an account at the judgment-seat of Christ, have I, or Mr. Burchell, or any other missionary, ever, in any way, induced you to think you ought to be free; or done any one thing which has led you, or any that you have known, to join in this rebellion?"

"No, minister," the grand prisoner replied; "you never did. And Mr. Burchell never did. No one minister say such a word. Not one, Sir. But me read it in my Bible."

Thence he had drawn all the great inspirations of his heart. The man of peace, the hero of liberty, the unspotted man of God, as a deacon of the church at Montego Bay, his worst enemies could never prove one word or act of his high-souled life which compromised, for one moment, the Christian name.

Of course, without difficulty Sam was condemned to die. No one tried to save him. He succeeded every day in communicating with his relatives. They sent to him the chapters and the hymns they read and sung at their domestic worship. He returned to them similar information of his soul's sources of secret life. This was all. But, oh, to each, how much was this!

The day came at length for Sam to die. A gentleman at Montego Bay, who had thoroughly sympathised with the slaves in their effort for liberty, but who then had no sympathy with Christianity, was extremely curious about the effect of religion in reference to such a death. Sam had, indeed, done nobly. He was thus far confessed a hero. But how would it end? His religiousness was well known. But would he *die like a man?* This was the question.

Taking his stand at the entrance to the gaol, Mr. Lewin reports:—I saw him come with his face as bright, and his form as erect, as if he had achieved some glorious victory. His firm foot kept the regular tread of the escort who led him to execution. His calm and peaceful eye singled out his old friends and acquaintances as he passed along, to many of whom he bowed his recognition. In front of the house where many of the family who had called him their "*slave*" watched him from the windows, he paused and bowed his last farewell. At the scaffold he ascended with that quick, light step, which was natural to him in the capacity of a butler, in which he had served. Nor did his self-possession once forsake him. Seeing the drop, before stepping on it to speak to the assembled throng, he tried its firmness with a single foot. Then advancing, with a clear voice he told them he was going to die because he had thought they had a right to be free. He protested his innocence of every outrage and wrong. He professed his firm faith in the atoning blood of Jesus, and his hope of eternal life; whilst his closing words about "the coming rain from heaven" were interpreted by many as prophetic of the freedom soon to come; and so he, doubtless, meant them.

"Ah! my broder," said he, "you see now de heaben is like brass, and de eart' is like iron. You all know what great trial we hab to pass troo. But God is good. You will see, no sooner is me gone dan God will open heaben, and send down plenty o' rain, and so you will all rejoice."

Then the barbarous rope was adjusted round his neck. The ever-revolting, and more than savage abomination, twined disgustingly and with hellish hideousness around that Christian throat, which had breathed naught but love, —which had been consecrated to praise and prayer,—and which, with no stain of dishonour, gladly bared itself to death, for *liberty*, for *truth*, for *Christ*, and to avert the sacrifice of Christian missionaries! Oh, tell us not of William Tell! Say nothing more for ever of Toussaint L'Ouverture! Let silence bury in oblivion together every ancient and modern hero and martyr, unless Sam Sharp also be confessed a star,—a star of first magnitude,—amongst the truly great!

Ah, see, the drop has fallen! How horrifying are those convulsive throes of a *Christian man*, who had done no moral wrong. Others who have *succeeded* in the self-same strife, who without a conscientious scruple have seized on victory, are immortalized with their fellows, whilst *he* dies a malefactor's death. Yet ere that body has ceased its swinging to and fro, whilst life is scarce extinct, huge drops of *rain* fall with heavy blows amidst the gathered crowd. These drops are quickly succeeded by torrents, though not a cloud is seen in the heavens, which had been indeed "like brass." The throng were all driven by this rain from the square, but as they fled the people whispered—"Didn't *God* tell him to say dat word? See, no sooner is him gone dan God open heaben, and send down plenty o' rain. Hi! what is dis mean?"

They who had sacrificed him buried him in the sands by the sea-shore, as one too vile to sleep with the common human race. But the pure waves long sang his requiem. The unbroken sunbeams long bathed with lustre his lowly place of rest. At last, at midnight, a band of missionaries, and that friend who saw him "*die like a man*" and like a saint, went to those sands and took away his bones. A beautiful coffin of mahogany was prepared. The skeleton complete was laid therein. A vault was made ready beneath the pulpit in the noble chapel. Sam Sharp was solemnly interred at a midnight hour, in the presence and amidst the loud sobs of those who had admired and loved him. There now those bones are lying. For five years and upwards I stood to preach the Word of God immediately above them, whilst to my soul they seemed to whisper a tribute to the glory of my work, and an inspiration to its pursuit even unto death.

For the brief statements here made I am indebted to those who personally knew this Christian hero, some of whom were united with him in his efforts. Alas, that hitherto "no marble marks his couch of lowly sleep!" No token of any kind records how Sam Sharp has lived and died. Yet, if ever human being deserved esteem, or admiration, or love,—if ever human deed deserved a bright memorial,—Sam Sharp should not be forgotten, nor should his bones lie still unhonoured. The mission cause owes him much. His black brethren in Jamaica are exalted and enriched through his voluntary death. But wherever throughout the world "Freedom's battle" is pressed on to victory, the happy issue has unquestionably been aided by the self-sacrifice of this truly Christian hero.

ON MINOR ERRORS.

To err is human. And unfortunately it is too human to allow the error, and to pass it by as a matter of little importance. This is especially the case if the error be a small one, or have reference to a point of confessedly no great weight as to the interests of truth or duty. Such errors are like little sins, easily overlooked, easily winked at, easily apologised for; and yet not without a real influence on the character of those who hold them, and far from being easily eradicated when once they have obtained a lodgment in the intellect. Like the grass called "couch" in our fields, they shoot out a thousand roots, rootlets, and fibres, to lay hold of the soil, and when you think you have ploughed, and harrowed, and raked, and burnt them all up, you have but to wait a little while to see

them spring up again, and appearing in directions to which you never would have thought they could have extended.

All error is of two kinds,—error of the eye, and error of the sense. The one is the fruit of defective faculties, or of wrong training; the other of a faulty heart. Traced to their root, they will all be found to grow out of the latter. If the eye be diseased, the cause is in the constitution. The steams which darken the understanding are exhaled from the passions. If a man shies at the light of truth it is because his vision is imperfect; but his imperfect vision is a symptom only of a more radical imperfection to be looked for in the depths of his moral nature.

When errors are fundamental and gross we are apt to be on our guard against them; their danger is at once perceived, and their very precincts instinctively avoided. It is with them as it is with gross sins; to trifle with them would be to forfeit your reputation; to fall into them would be to jeopardise your soul. The greater the error the greater its power of attraction for other errors; but all errors being by necessity of their nature within the sphere of the influence of all others, the smaller have a direct tendency to gravitate towards the larger, so that he who begins by embracing the less can never be sure that he shall not end by espousing the greater.

All the errors into which men fall may be discriminated into two classes,—unbeliefs and misbeliefs. In the one case the truth is rejected; in the other it is misunderstood. Yet in both cases a falsehood is the result; the chief difference lying in this, that in the former the falsehood takes the form of a denial of a truth, or a negative; and with the latter that of a positive,—the affirmation as true of that which is untrue. This consideration alone is sufficiently grave to oblige us to bring all our beliefs under the strict supervision of conscience. The smallest error is a bypath out of the way of truth; and if you turn aside by a single step it is impossible to foresee how far you may wander before you find the right road again. Every error has in it the nature of a disease; and once the constitutional integrity is broken in upon and disturbed, in however slight a degree, no human sagacity can predict to what extent the malady may proceed, or in what consequences it may issue.

The most trifling error may put a man on the *wrong side* with respect to truth. In this way he does not only fall into bad company, but becomes the ally of falsehood, and has an intellectual and moral interest in fighting its battles and seeking to procure its adoption by others. Thus the smallest error, like the smallest sin, may be the introduction to a long series of errors, which shall go on propagating themselves with an ever accelerating ratio, till the whole mind, conscience, and heart, have become inextricably involved in their dangerous and pernicious influence.

But to descend from generalities. In what sphere of human interest or action can the slightest error be harmless? In that of politics? Why, errors here supposed to have been of no great consequence have inflicted some of the greatest wrongs and entailed some of the greatest sufferings on our country. To go no further than those connected with the science of political economy, who can compute the evils which have resulted from

mistaken views on the question of Free Trade and Protection, by which our legislature was misled and enslaved for whole generations? Whether foreign wheat, coming into our ports, should enter free or pay five shillings a quarter or any other amount of duty, might have appeared, as no doubt to thousands it did appear, a question of very minor importance, and one to be settled by mere regards to expediency and the interests of a class; and yet what do we find from experience? not only that that error was hanging like a nightmare on the energies of our commerce, and bringing starvation and death to thousands of homes, but that it was retarding the progress of civilisation and thereby postponing the development of the race. Again, ought every citizen, especially every Christian citizen, to acquaint himself with political questions and political parties sufficiently to enable him to take an intelligent and independent part in settling the great political problems of the age? will be regarded by some as an inquiry of no great moment, whether decided in one way or the other. Others, drivellers or interested sophists, will decide it at once in the negative, averring that Christianity is something altogether above and apart from politics, and that the believer in Christ is to stand aloof, and superciliously allow the "potsherds to strive with the potsherds of the earth." As if the Christian had no political rights to defend, and no political duties to discharge; or if he has, he must entrust the one to the statesman and submit the other to the dictation of the priest, rewarding the former by unbuttoning for him his one breeches pocket, and the latter by unbuttoning for him the other, and allowing them to divide the contents between them as they please. This may be a very convenient doctrine for rulers, whether in Church or State. But what would be the inevitable consequences of its adoption by the people at large? Social languor and prostration, the loss of our liberties, both civil and religious, and the forfeiture of every blessing for which it is worth while to live. The greatness or the littleness, the dignity or the degradation, the freedom or the slavery, nay, even the existence or destruction, of a whole people, will be found to be really bound up with this question of individual rights and obligations. No man can be a safe politician who is not a good Christian; and the best Christians must always make the best citizens. Woe to that country whose government is abandoned by the wisest and the holiest, and handed over to the tender mercies of professional politicians and a hireling clergy,—those two sisters of the horseleech, whose perpetual and insatiable cry has always been and is still, "Give, give."

If we ascend to a higher region, we shall find illustrations crowding on us from every side. In speculations on the subject of morals how many points are there which at first sight strike the inquirer as of very little practical account. Take, for instance, the disputes which long divided moralists, and divide some of them still, as to the ultimate standard of right and wrong. While all perhaps have been virtually agreed with respect to the great rules by which men ought to regulate their lives, one has contended for expediency, another for self-interest, another for the will of God, as the supreme authority under which we all ought to act; while another has coolly looked on, feeling, or affecting to feel, the profoundest

indifference as to the whole subject. Now surely this last cannot be right. For let one of those emergencies which are sure to arise in a man's life, and which may justly be called critical, occur, and in which the action he may take must decide definitively his true moral standing and ascertain his real character for the future, and will any one undertake to say that it will make no difference to him whether he refer for authoritative guidance to a false standard of duty or to the true one? Nay, will not all depend upon the moral criterion to which he submits his judgment and conscience? To act according to what appears to be expedient, apart from all regard to the supreme will, would be to act like an Atheist. To consult nothing but supposed self-interest would be to deify self and ignore both God and society. To act from a sovereign regard to the will of the Creator would be to act like a subject and a Christian, and so as to obtain the approbation of every good man, that is, of every man whose approbation is worth thinking of. As in the two previous cases all faith must be forsworn and all duty abandoned; so, on the other hand, in this case faith is evidently the root, and duty the tree, and the fruits are already dropping into heaven. But errors in speculation can hardly in any case be without their effects on the behaviour, and the most trifling ones may be productive of aberrations which reason cannot but censure and conscience condemn.

If now we mount to the highest sphere of all, that of religion, the matter becomes still more important and solemn. Discounting all confessedly vital questions, there yet remain over a number of others which all will acknowledge to be points of less momentous interest, but in reference to which none can truly hold that error would be either harmless or innocent. In matters of doctrine, for example, take the subjects of predestination, effectual calling, justification by faith, final perseverance, the ultimate condition of the lost. Now we apprehend that the stiffest maintainers of either side of these questions would shrink from demanding assent to their views as an essential condition of acceptance with God. All will agree that faith in the Redeemer is the one ground on which that acceptance is to be looked for. At the same time it would be a great mistake to suppose that error on either of these points can be wholly innocuous. The nature of the case utterly forbids it. All error has in it a reproductive energy; it must grow and disseminate itself; it is catching, and you cannot hold it without communicating it to others. He who errs, then, on either of these matters, is not only robbed of the truth in that matter, but has received an enemy to the truth into his heart; and it is only divine grace, rendering more active and powerful the truth on other and more vital questions, that can preserve him from more serious mischief, or prevent him from being altogether gained over to the wrong side. Take, again, the constitution, government, and discipline of the Christian Church. Of the three great systems now prevailing, the Episcopal, the Presbyterian, and the Congregational, none, we suppose, will affirm that either of them excludes its upholders from the true church, or from the hope of salvation by Christ. To err here, therefore, is not necessarily to endanger the soul. Nevertheless to err here cannot be without its influence for evil on the mind and life of him that errs. Be

the error where it may, to believe it as a truth involves the obligation to act upon and defend it, and that would be to act upon and defend a mistake. But this is not all. It would at the same time be to oppose the truth, and to weaken its power in the world. It would consequently be to place ones-self in opposition to Him who is the truth, and whose cause we have pledged ourselves to defend. We may instance, further, the vexed question of Christian baptism. Here again vital points are not at issue. If there be a Baptist who asserts that no unbaptized person can be saved, we are not arguing the point with him. As little are we disposed to argue at present with those who believe in baptismal regeneration. Our concern is with such as confess that true believers in the Son of God, whether Baptist or Pædobaptist, are safe. To such we need not apologise for putting error on the subject amongst "minor errors." Still we hope we shall not be understood as regarding the question as a trivial one. It cannot be so, look at it from which side you will. Are you a Baptist? Then you believe that your Pædobaptist brethren (not knowingly, you admit) have changed one of the ordinances of Christ, both in the subjects of it and in the manner of it; and have substituted for it what can hardly be recognised even as a caricature of the original rite. Are you a Pædobaptist? Then you must believe that the Baptist violates one of his most solemn duties as a parent, deprives his offspring of one of their most sacred and precious rights, and contravenes the will of the great Master on a point touching the very constitution of his kingdom, and affecting some of the objects of his tenderest love. We cannot see any logical grounds of compromise here. "Agreeing to differ" is mere twaddle. We must, indeed, agree, *although* we differ, our agreement resting on grounds far deeper than those on which we divide. But the two views are essentially antagonistic, and must continue in earnest collision till the one shall have finally overcome the other. We will only trouble the reader with one illustration more,—the question of Church and State. Here, again, all agree that good men are found in both ranks. Some of the brightest examples of Christian life and character in our own day are to be found in and out of the Establishment. The question, therefore, is one not affecting the fundamentals of our holy faith. Does it, however, follow from this that error with respect to it can be otherwise than criminal in itself and injurious in its operation? We think not. For if the Establishment be right, we Nonconformists are not only not helping to sustain that which is right, but doing much, if not all we can, towards overthrowing and destroying it. And not only so, but we are abetting and upholding systems founded in error, and intended to disseminate this error as widely as possible in the world. On the other hand, if Establishments are wrong, as we in our consciences believe them to be, their friends are not simply supporting the wrong and opposing the right and the true, but are compelling the friends of the truth to aid them in upholding the wrong in defiance of their own consciences, and in spite of their strongest objections and most earnest protests against such a course. Nor can a single member of the Establishment vindicate himself from this charge. It is an essential incident of his position. Whether he consider it or not,

he is every moment contributing his share towards the commission of this great national crime, and the infliction of this monstrous social injustice.

These illustrations all show, and a thousand more might be adduced to show, that no error is safe or harmless. The slightest error is a leak in the great reservoir of truth, and, if unattended to, may gradually wear larger and larger, till the whole embankment becomes undermined, and the entire accumulated mass be swept away in an hour. As the tendency of sin is to harden the heart, so the tendency of error is to darken the understanding and render it incompetent to discriminate between truth and its opposites. Hence a wise man will be as rigid in his belief as he is scrupulous in his morals, and will avoid with almost equal anxiety every cheat that is sought to be put on the one and every snare that is laid for the other.

What is the principle, then, that should guide us in this matter? *As to others*,—conscientiously to avoid interfering with their liberty. They are not responsible to us. Let them stand or fall to their own Master. Truth can only be served by freedom. It is not generosity but justice to refuse to condemn those who differ from us. *As to ourselves*,—to allow ourselves no license; to be thoroughly intolerant of all mistakes and misconceptions, subjecting every candidate for our belief to the most relentless scrutiny; taking nothing on trust and nothing for granted; but eagerly embracing and courageously holding whatever commends itself to us as true, even if we should have to hold it alone and defend it against universal opposition.

FUNERAL SERMONS.

"It is my intention, this evening, to improve the death of our respected brother, Mr. Brown." An announcement, the like of which has often been heard by those who are accustomed to attend Dissenting places of worship. The results of such a notice are, doubtless, well known to our readers. An accession of strangers increases the evening congregation. Attention is divided between the pulpit and the occupants of a certain pew which is filled with the deceased member's friends arrayed in deepest mourning. The hymns chosen for the occasion are those which arrange themselves under the head of "Heaven" or "Death" in *Watts* or the *Selection*. One can guess beforehand, with tolerable accuracy, the tunes which will be sung, strains of a dolorous character filling the sacred edifice. It is not needful to be "a prophet, or the son of a prophet," in order to prognosticate the class of passages from which the text will be taken. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord;" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord;" "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;" are universally favourite verses for meditation at such seasons. After a discourse based upon the portion of Scripture chosen, allusion is made to the departed. The mention of his name acts like magic on the hearers. Those who have been listening listlessly brighten up. Sleepers awake. Even restless, weary children settle down quietly, and open wide their eyes in eager expectation. Then follow various particulars touching the person under notice. When he joined the church, the

circumstances connected with his conversion, the length of time his final illness lasted, how he bore it, and a description of his character, occupy the last quarter of an hour of the preacher's homily.

When and where did this custom originate? This is an interesting question: and before we proceed to offer a few thoughts on funeral sermons, we take the opportunity of replying to it. Making the historical part of the Bible our authority, there is no evidence of the existence of the practice among the Jews. Elegies, like that of David over Saul and Jonathan, were sometimes composed and sung, and this is the nearest approach to our modern usage. It does not, however, appear that, when an eminent king, prophet, or priest died, public orations were delivered in special allusion to the event. We nowhere read of a large multitude being gathered together that they might listen to an address avowedly based on the circumstance of a certain person's decease, and containing special reference to his excellencies or defects. Neither have we been able to ascertain that this was done by the church in the first stages of its development. We are never told, in the Book of the Acts, that the martyrdom of Stephen, for instance, was "improved," or that the awful and fatal punishment which fell to the lot of Ananias and Sapphira formed the ground of apostolic or diaconal homilies.

Startling, even shocking, as the announcement may be to some, the truth seems to be that the usage was Pagan in its birth. While Christianity indirectly influenced other religions, it was, in its turn, eventually influenced by them, or, at least, the church was. Converted heathens not unfrequently retained old habits, infusing into them a higher spirit. Social customs, which in themselves were considered harmless, were engrafted on the tree of spiritual life. This was, no doubt, the case with funeral sermons. The Greeks and Romans were wont to have orations delivered at the pyre whereon the dead were burned, in which the name, titles, rank, offices, and general history of the departed one were recapitulated. The ceremony, thus hallowed by the example of their forefathers, was preserved by some who were brought to a knowledge of the truth; modifications of it were effected; the harangue gradually transformed itself into the sermon; the practice proved acceptable, extended itself, and resulted in what is now familiar to us all.

Thus much as regards the commencement of the ecclesiastical habit before us. Is that habit right and wise? Yes, and no. Like most other things of human invention, it has a dark and a light side. We will try to be honest in speaking of both. First, as to the evils associated with it. That there are such, we feel sure no candid and thoughtful observer will deny. They are often painfully palpable. Here, for example, is a danger incident to funeral sermons which is very obvious, *exaggeration*. "We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen," when we say that the majority of these discourses are tainted with it. Defects are ignored, excellencies described and extolled. If the subject of the oral memoir had a grain of wisdom, it will be carefully secured and exhibited. If he possessed a particle of piety, it will certainly be found and shewn. No virtue is forgotten, no grace neglected. The classical maxim, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*, is transformed into a mandate which is sacredly obeyed. Observe, we are simply stating a fact. The motive from which the action in question proceeds is quite another thing. In most cases, we believe the intention to be a good one. The very evil springs from one of the most beautiful relics of love left in our fallen nature. It arises from the generous desire to think as well, and, therefore, speak as well as possible, of those whom death has hallowed by removing into the solemn and mysterious unseen world. But we all know how easily an emotion, which in itself is most lawful and commendable, may take a wrong development, and grow into a most

obnoxious abuse. This, we take it, is the secret of the defect under notice. Ministers do not mean to be dishonest. They unconsciously lay themselves open to the charge of untruthfulness, under the influence of a feeling which, *per se*, is praiseworthy. Albeit, the results of this exaggeration are very pernicious. Its effects on irreligious and worldly hearers, more especially, are baneful to the last degree. They listen to the praises of "our departed brother" Mr. A. with a cynical smile, because, perhaps, they happen to know that he was always grumbling at the rich, and thinking himself martyred to selfishness for the reason that he was not relieved as much as he fancied he ought to have been. They are informed of Mr. B.'s zeal for the cause of Christ; but as they receive the various items which herald his earnestness, they call to mind the fact that he failed to order his own household well. Or, as they attend to the category of religious industries made out in favour of Mrs. C., they are unpleasantly reminded of one duty which she flagrantly neglected, namely, consideration and kindness to her domestics. Surely it were better to let a life be its own biographer, than by one-sided portrayal of it to create such ridicule and revulsion as is thus produced.

This leads us to remark another mischief, by no means uncommon in connexion with funeral sermons. We mean *unskilful delineation of character*. Of course mental and moral portraiture is not a necessary ingredient in homilies about the dead; but it is a frequent accompaniment of them. Most of us have heard it attempted. Yes, attempted is the right word, not accomplished. It is not every one that can scan his fellow-creatures aright. In nothing is there more grievous blundering. Here and there you find a man whose quick intellectual vision takes in, almost at a glance, human idiosyncrasies. Such, however, "are few and far between." Thackeray, Dickens, and Trollope photograph the great family called "Society" with marvellous accuracy. But we are not all gifted after their fashion. This is just what some pulpit artists appear to forget. Accordingly, they try to do what they cannot, and signally fail. They grind their colours, put the canvas on its stretcher, arrange the easel, make stroke after stroke with the brush, and at length succeed in producing a face and figure remarkably unlike the original. "I never had the pleasure of knowing him;" "The person described must be some one else who chanced to bear the same name as the one whom I once knew;" such are the inward comments that one is apt to make while submitting to divers of these delineations. All blunders are bad; but those which emanate from the rostrum of the divine are among the worst. The grandiloquent prose and limping rhyme which too often disfigure tombstones, rarely equal them.

A third injury done by the frequent preaching of funeral sermons is this, *people are made callous about death*. The repetition of "improvements" defeats its own end. The object of the preacher is to warn the living, to stimulate them to prepare for eternity, to show them the utter uncertainty of existence. The first few times his hearers listen to such discourses they are, most likely, touched, perhaps deeply affected. But when like occasions recur over and over again, a reaction takes place. The whole thing gets so hackneyed as to lose its effect. The attendants at the chapel know pretty well what will be said, and so the sermon becomes to them a hollow, noisy echo, instead of a powerful, invigorating voice. Hymns, passages read as lessons, phrases used in prayer, and the general tenor of thought and feeling in what is said, are all anticipated. The service becomes a stereotyped affair, known beforehand, and learned by heart. Is it not so? Cannot the reader bear testimony to the truth of what we say? And if so, it must be conceded that it is a most pernicious abuse. Nothing can be more undesirable than for men to grow callously familiar with death. There is a reverence for that dread mystery which ought to be

sedulously guarded. The tomb, inasmuch as it is the narrow entrance to immortality, is an unspeakably solemn place; therefore we ought not to bring it into contempt by commonplace and frequent talk about it. It was the wise proverb of an ancient philosopher, "Wear not the image of God on your ring."

Other evils arising from the custom might be specified, as, for instance, the fact that, from fear of producing ill-feeling among their relatives, funeral sermons are sometimes preached for persons who, though in the main consistent Christians, have obviously no claim on special and public attention. But we forbear. It affords us no pleasure to dwell on the dark, we, therefore, gladly turn, briefly, in concluding, to the brighter side of our theme. After the complaints made, it may be asked, "What, then, would you do? How remedy the defects of which you have spoken?" The matter, if we understand it rightly, is a simple one, though it requires firmness and courage in the carrying of it out. The remedy is this. Let ministers strive to be intelligent and conscientious in what they say on such occasions. Let them guard most sedulously against exaggeration, and be equally careful never to attempt spiritual photography or oil-painting, unless they know that they can do it efficiently. Let them never preach funeral sermons, excepting for persons of notable goodness, whose excellencies justify prominent reference. Let them take heed that, great as the temptation may be to draw an extra congregation together thereby, they do not do their fellow-men the lamentable injury of making them indifferent to death by too frequent expatiation thereon. Habitual and vigorous regard to such a course as this cannot fail in effecting a healthful reform. Sure we are, moreover, that those who adopt it will be the first to feel its benefits. Experience will speedily prove its worth.

Reverent and judicious remark touching the life and death of a really holy man is fitting and salutary. If it is true that

> "The chamber where the good man meets his fate
> Is privileged beyond the common walk
> Of virtuous life,"

then the sanctuary in which the occurrences of that "chamber" are related is "privileged" too. "The memory of the just is for a blessing." Mighty are "the powers of the world to come" when associated with the recollection of a lately-departed friend and saint! If death's darts wound our hearts, they also wound our indifference to the sacred and the divine. Few bereavements are there which leave not some moral or spiritual blessing behind. And even if we cannot record any great religious boon as following such an event, we can, at least, usually say with Tennyson:

> "The shade by which my life was crossed,
> Which made a desert of the mind,
> Has made me kindly with my kind,
> And like to him whose sight is lost."

Hence, we repeat it, wise and earnest allusion, from the pulpit, to a really holy and useful Christian who has lately passed away, may be eminently appropriate, and fraught with happy issues to the living. Indeed, so far from abolishing the system of funeral sermons, we think it would be a positive wrong, and an irreparable loss, to do so entirely. There are private histories which ought not to pass into oblivion, and which the pulpit can most fittingly rescue therefrom. An old man dies. He has been an honest, a steadfast, simple-hearted Christian from his youth. Weak points sink into the shade before an examination of his good qualities. He is missed by every one. His family cannot, of course, replace him. But that is not all. His influence radiated far and wide. The result is, that the neighbourhood in which he dwelt is deprived, by his death, of a moral power long felt. His departure leaves a marked and lamented vacancy in the ranks of the church militant. Now, all must surely feel that

such an one as this may most appropriately be made the subject of ministerial remark, and that not thus to advert to so excellent a life would be to miss a golden opportunity of "pointing a moral."

But, after all, a quiet, trustful death is the best funeral sermon. No better homily than that. It is one of those acts which, verily, "speak louder than words," and are infinitely more eloquent. So that you and I, dear reader, need not mind much what may or may not be said about us when we are gone, provided we have gone rightly. We can be our own preachers. God help us, that such may be the case. Live a life for Christ, O my friend! live a life for Christ, O my soul! and the end shall not fail to be blessed.

"See that your lamps are burning,
Replenish them with oil;
Look now for your salvation,
The end of sin and toil.
The watchers on the mountain
Proclaim the Bridegroom near;
Go, meet him as he cometh,
With hallelujahs clear."

Poetry.

MY CROSS.

It is not heavy, agonizing woe,
Bearing me down with hopeless, crushing weight,
No ray of comfort in the gathering gloom,
A heart bereaved, a household desolate.

It is not sickness, with her withering hand,
Keeping me low upon a couch of pain,
Longing each morning for the weary night,
At night for weary day to come again.

It is not poverty, with chilling blast,
The sunken eye, the hunger-wasted form;
The dear ones perishing for lack of bread,
With no safe shelter from the winter's storm.

It is not slander, with her evil tongue;
'Tis no "presumptuous sin" against my God;
Not reputation lost, or friends betrayed:
That such is not my cross I thank my God.

Mine is a daily cross, of petty cares,
Of little duties pressing on my heart,
Of little troubles hard to reconcile,
Of inward struggles, overcome in part.

My feet are weary in their daily rounds,
My heart is weary of its daily care—
O, how my sinful nature doth rebel!
I pray for grace my daily cross to bear.

It is not heavy, Lord, yet oft I pine;
It is not heavy, yet 'tis everywhere;
By day and night each hour my cross I bear;
I dare not lay it down—Thou keep'st it there.

I dare not lay it down. I only ask,
That, taking up my daily cross, I may
Follow my Master humbly, step by step,
Through clouds and darkness, unto perfect day.

Reviews.

Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament. By C. F. Keil, D.D., and F. Delitzsch, D.D., Professors of Theology. Vol. I. The Pentateuch. Translated from the German by the Rev. James Martin, B.A., Nottingham.

Theological and Homiletical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. Specially designed and adapted for the use of Ministers and Students. From the German of G. V. Lechler, D.D., and K. Gerok. Edited by J. P. Lange, D.D., Professor of Divinity in the University of Bonn. Translated by the Rev. Paton J. Gloag, Minister of Blantyre. (Clark's Foreign Theological Library.)

The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ. A Complete Critical Examination of the Origin, Contents, and Connection of the Gospels. Translated from the German of J. P. Lange, D.D. Edited, with additional notes, by the Rev. Marcus Dods, A.M. In Six Vols. Vols. I., II., III. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark. London: Hamilton.

Ministers and students have long been laid under heavy obligations to the Messrs. Clark for putting within their reach so many valuable English and foreign theological works. The enterprising publishers seem determined that there shall be no room for diminution in this obligation, for no books have ever issued from their house more valuable in themselves, or more timely in their appearance, than those the titles of which we have given above. The work on the Acts is one of that series of commentaries on the New Testament, edited by Dr. Lange, the special features of which have by this time become familiar to theological students. The separation of each department of commentary from the other greatly increases the usefulness of the book for purposes of consultation; while the "Homiletical hints," though sometimes a little fanciful and far-fetched, are often very suggestive, and likely to prove helpful to the preacher, without in any degree superseding the necessity of thought and labour on his own part.

Nothing could well be more opportune than the publication, just at this juncture, of an English translation of Keil and Delitzsch's "Commentary on the Pentateuch." It is one of the completest and most satisfactory vindications of that part of Scripture which has appeared. We do not mean that the learned authors have cleared up every difficulty, nor that we regard their mode of meeting objections as, in all instances, the best that could be chosen; but assuredly there is more than enough here to attest the rashness and shallowness of such slap-dash, and almost amusingly-confident, destructive criticism as that of the Bishop of Natal.

Of Dr. Lange's "Life of Jesus," we hope to render a fuller account when the three volumes, still required to complete the translation, have been published. At present, we can do little more than announce its appearance in an English dress, and recommend it to the study of our readers as the most thorough and exhaustive work upon the subject which even German industry and learning have produced. It is certainly strange to find the erratic tendencies of English and French theologians met and corrected by German teachers; and rather humiliating to find Englishmen picking up, and parading as new discoveries, forms of thought and modes of criticism which German theologians have outgrown and left behind years ago. But we are none the less inclined to welcome such testimony to the truth as these books afford: a testimony all the more impressive, because it comes from a land whose leading thinkers have been the high-priests of sceptical philosophy. The task of editing Lange's work seems to have fallen into eminently able and judicious hands. And the translation of this and the other books (no unimportant matter in respect to German works), is, on the whole, very well done; far better than in some of the earlier volumes of the Foreign

Theological Library. To those familiar with that series, the names of Mr. Martin and Mr. Ryland will be their own vouchers; and the others, whose names are less known to us, seem not unworthy coadjutors of these practised translators. We thank the publishers heartily for these volumes, and wait eagerly the completion of Lange's work.

"Thy Poor Brother." Letters to a Friend on helping the Poor. By Mrs. Sewell. London: Jarrold & Sons.

This work is one not for the reviewer to criticise, but for the Christian worker to study. Mrs. Sewell acknowledges the "difficulty and delicacy" of the task she has undertaken; and for those very reasons she has done well to undertake it. Its "delicacy" demands a woman's tact, and its difficulties are such as can be solved only by the wise simplicity of Christian love. Many homely things will be found in this volume—in their right place because they are homely. Small details are given throughout, with the true feeling that it is in the harmony of small details that the completeness of life consists. The tone throughout is most winning; deeply serious, as befits the magnitude of the evils with which all true helpers of their fellow-men and fellow-women must struggle; genial withal, and tender, and loving. At the very outset, Mrs. Sewell protests, with an earnestness not too strong, against aught that would encourage the pauper spirit—"the most cruel and dangerous thing we can do;" yet one which "would seem to require all but the wisdom of an angel to avoid it." This promises well, and the rest of the book is pitched in the same key. The letters discuss all sorts of subjects—food and cooking, washing and cleaning, economy of time and money, domestic management, and especially the care of children, intellectual and religious teaching, the culture of the tastes and affections, with a hundred related topics, as regarded by one who, with a true sisterly sympathy, can look on them from the point of view of the poor themselves, and yet can bring to their examination fine intellect, tenderness, and taste. The Lady Bountifuls of our day might judge the style of administering benevolence which our author recommends, to be quite too homely. Mrs. Pardiggle would find it culpably tolerant of little faults and weaknesses; but we are sure that those who understand the poor will recognise the counsels of true wisdom and charity. We had noted passages for quotation; but quotation is needless. The incidents narrated, too, would possibly appear unduly insignificant, if repeated here apart from their connexion. We content ourselves with a strong recommendation. Those young people especially who are beginning—perhaps with a little natural indecision and awkwardness—to interest themselves in works of mercy, will feel that they have, in this book, the companionship of an experienced and earnest fellow-worker, who, in its pages, *talks* to them in the homely, practical, loving fashion that its gifted authoress might employ were she by their side. An appendix contains three exquisite, heart-touching letters on the treatment of "The Fallen," by Mrs. G. W. Sheppard, of Frome.

The Restoration of Belief. By Isaac Taylor. A New Edition, Revised. London and Cambridge: Macmillan & Co.

We welcome with more than ordinary satisfaction this beautiful reprint of what has already become a classic work in the Library of Christian Evidence. Never has the ripe erudition and practised ability of its venerated author been more worthily employed than in preparing this tribute for the shrine of Christian truth. We were familiar with it while it yet remained anonymous; and now, after the lapse of years, have reviewed its arguments with new delight, more than ever convinced that they impregnably fortify the old *historical* position of the defenders of our faith. Perhaps the section to which readers will turn with the most eager interest is the concluding one, written for this edition, in which Mr. Taylor addresses himself to the work of M. Rénan, and, without any attempt to refute the brilliant Frenchman step by step, shews the utter futility of his too-celebrated romance as a contribution to the infidel cause. For M. Rénan upsets the con-

clusions in which unbelief has hitherto rested. As the German rationalists gave the *coup de grâce* to the heartless infidelity of the Voltairian era; as Dr. Strauss, in his turn, gibbeted rationalism; so now M. Rénan has demolished the mythic theory. The historic reality of the Founder of the Christian religion, with the antiquity and the *substantial* authenticity of the four Gospels, are now admitted. Thus far, therefore, the spirit of scepticism has travelled on its road to truth. But what of its present halting-place? In successive weighty paragraphs, which we regret not having room to quote, Mr. Taylor exposes, perhaps better than has been done by any one before, the manifest, grotesque, misconception of *admitted* facts which pervades M. Rénan's treatise: comparing very felicitously the picture drawn by the French *savant* with the account that some keen observant Oriental might be supposed to give of English customs and social life after a visit to our country. He is sharp-sighted, quick-witted, and veracious; but his entire want of sympathy with the moral atmosphere in which he finds himself, prevents his attaining the remotest conception of the truth of matters that lie before his own eyes. "Misconceptions of this species—bewilderments, in fact—do not admit of rectification. The book, therefore, is safe from refutation: it will continue to be devoured by uneasy disbelievers. It will never again be spoken of after the day when the next voice on that side shall have uttered its thunder."

Most cordially do we commend the treatise, in this its new form, to all who crave either satisfaction or confirmation on the greatest questions that can occupy the intellect of man.

The Story of Carey, Marshman, and Ward, the Serampore Missionaries. By JOHN CLARK MARSHMAN. (Bunyan Library, Vol. XIII.) London: J. Heaton & Son.

We have, ever since we read it, regarded Mr. Marshman's "Life and Times of Carey, Marshman, and Ward," as, independently of the imperishable interest of its subject, one of the best executed biographical works of recent years. But the size of that book put it beyond the reach of many readers, and deterred some from perusing it. The narrative needed to be put in a more available form; while it well deserved popularizing, and admitted of abridgment with less injury than most works of the kind suffer in that process. We are heartily glad, therefore, to receive from the hands of the original biographer, this compressed edition of this glorious tale of Christian heroism and consecration. The difficult work of abridgment appears to us to have been performed with singular judgment and success. It has been accomplished, as the author informs us, by "the omission of those historical notices which were intended to illustrate the times and the scenes in which the Serampore Missionaries acted;" and, also, by passing over the details of the sad controversies which embittered the latter years of their life and labour. We have never been among those who thought that too much was said about those unhappy circumstances in the larger book. A vindication of the character of the noble trio was due from their biographer, and that vindication has always seemed to us triumphant in its success, and most moderate in its tone, considering the relation of the writer to the most heavily-assailed member of the Missionary band. But the reader will share the writer's "satisfaction" in finding these matters no further dwelt on here than was absolutely necessary to the completeness and fidelity of the narrative. The whole book, it will thus be seen, is more personal, and purely biographical in its character, than that of which it is an abridgment. It thus fills a place of its own, without destroying, or even diminishing, the value of the larger work.

Of the surpassing interest of the "Story" itself we need say nothing here. So long as we have hearts to feel the power of Christian devotion and enterprise, and souls to appreciate the highest style of heroism, so long such a record must stir and stimulate us to holy emulation. No healthier or more inspiring book could be put into the hands of the young; while Christians of all ages may linger over its pages with an interest which never flags, and a practical benefit which will increase with each perusal.

Christian Cabinet.

THE POWER OF GODLINESS.

THE *form of godliness* is very common in these days of ours; but *the power* of it is very rare. How few persons shall we find in the visible church who live and act in the strength of God! Generally, men do whatever they do in their own strength; and that not only in human things, but in divine. How seldom do we see in Christians, in the discharge of their several duties, more than the power of men,—the greatest part by far, not only of those who are called Christians, but also of forward professors, being ignorant what it is to be *strengthened with might in the inner man*. How little is there, among all our plenty, of that preaching which is not in the plausible words of man's wisdom, but *in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power!* How few congregations, among the many that are in this kingdom, are gathered together in the spirit and power of our Lord Jesus Christ! How few of those Christians are there in whom is *the exceeding greatness of God's power*, together with the effectual working of it! But *the form of godliness* is now become almost the covering of all flesh; and, in these days of light and knowledge, it is accounted by all that are not downright atheists a great shame not "*to seem* to be religious." And when men, and families, and congregations are gotten into this *form*, they think themselves both safe and happy, as being near the suburbs of the kingdom of God, and close neighbours to the saints. And this form of godliness—as it is of very easy compliance with flesh and blood in this particular, in that, according to this, men only make their actions new, retaining still their old natures—so it is also of great credit and esteem with carnal gospellers. "*But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man;*" and he, being partaker of the power of God himself, can in some measure discern both the presence and the want of it in others; both which he knows in his own experience.

Now this *form of godliness* is, when men are godly without God, and anointed without Christ, and regenerate not having the Spirit;—that is, when they have a semblance of holiness, but not the thing itself—a semblance of grace, retaining their old natures.

And such Christians as these perform spiritual duties with natural strength—heavenly duties with earthly strength—the works of God with the power of men. In the religion of these men there is the outward duty done, and it may be very speciously and plausibly; but there is none of Christ nor the Spirit in the duty. There is their own working towards God, which is faint and faithless; but not God's own working in them towards himself, which is lively and mighty. And all the religious acts they do, are only their own operations, and not the operations of God in them (John iii. 6; Rom. viii. 8).

This form of godliness, how pleasing soever it be to a man's self, and of what reckoning soever with others who are like himself, yet is indeed of very evil and woeful consequence, whether we regard the doings or the sufferings unto which this form necessarily engages.

For first, when men, by occasion of this form, are called forth to do the great works of God, and yet are destitute of the power of God, their duties are above their strength, and their strength bears no proportion to their duties; and so, sooner or later, meeting with difficulties, they faint and languish as a snail, their work being too high for their faculties; for nature, being strained above its power, by degrees grows weary, and returns to its old temper again; and he who sought that glory which was not his own, at last lies down in his own shame.

Again, *the form of godliness* exposes a man to those evils that are incident to the faithful because of godliness. Now, when a man hath the same evils with the faithful, and not the same power to support him under those evils; when men have the same evils in the flesh, but not the same power in the Spirit—the same burdens on their shoulders, but not the same everlasting arms under-

neath them—they fall sadly and desperately, to the great scandal of the ways of God (Matt. xiii. 20, 21).

However, if men be not called forth to such eminent doings and sufferings, and so escape such manifest discoveries and downfalls, yet the form of godliness hath this evil in it, that it brings a man only to the troublesome part of religion, but not to the comfortable; it engages a man with the same duties with the godly, but supplies him not with the same strength; it involves him in the same bitterness of flesh, but doth not furnish him with the same joy of Spirit. For, as such a man's religion doth not reach above flesh and blood, no more doth his strength and comforts. And so he performs duties at a low rate; yea, and his bare and empty form casts a black veil upon religion, and utterly obscures its beauty and glory, and makes the whole world judge meanly of it, and to think it a matter only of singularity and humour, and not of "power;" whereas, when a Christian walks in the strength of the Spirit, doing and suffering the will of God beyond all strength and abilities of flesh and blood, the world oftentimes gazes at him, and many are provoked "*to glorify God, who hath given such power to men.*"

For this *power of godliness*, among other things, hath these three advantages:—

1st. It makes a man do everything strongly and mightily; and whatever might take a man off from duty, or distract and disturb him in it, all falls to nothing before this power. There is that strength in each duty performed by the power of the anointing, which declares it to be the operation of God himself in man—nothing else but the very power of God, Jesus Christ himself, in action in us (1 Cor. ii. 4; Eph. i. 19; vi. 10).

2nd. It makes a man inflexible in the ways of God, that he shall neither turn to the right hand nor to the left, but take straight steps towards the mark set before him. No fears, nor favours, nor frowns, nor flatteries, nor temptations, nor insinuations, nor designs of others, nor ends of his own, can turn him aside. He carries such strength in his spirit, that he can never be bended; and, so far forth as he partakes of the power of God, he is as unmovable as God himself (Rom. xvi. 25).

3rd. It makes a man invincible by all evils and enemies, because all the power against him is but the power of the creature, but the power in him is the power of God; and the power of God easily overcomes the mightiest power of the creature, but is never overcome by it. And if this power in a Christian should be prevailed against, God himself, who is that power, should be conquered, which is impossible (2 Cor. xii. 9; Phil. iv. 13).

To conclude: the *power of godliness* is the doer of every duty in God's kingdom, the subduer of every sin, the conqueror of each tribulation and temptation, the life of every performance, the glory of each grace, the beauty of a Christian's life, the stability of his conversation, the lustre of his religion, his great honour and excellency both in doing and suffering; yea, it is the very glory of God himself in the church of God, for by faith the Lord arises on us, and by this power of godliness his glory is seen upon us.—*W. Dell*, A.D. 1645.

THE STARLESS CROWN.

WEARIED and worn with earthly cares,
I yielded to repose,
And soon before my raptured sight a glorious vision rose;
I thought, whilst slumbering on my couch in midnight's solemn gloom,
I heard an angel's silvery voice, and radiance fill'd my room.

A gentle touch awakened me;—a gentle whisper said,—
"Arise, O sleeper, follow me!" and thro' the air we fled;
We left the earth so far away that like a speck it seem'd,
And heavenly glory, calm and pure, across our pathway stream'd.

Still on we went—my soul was wrapt in silent ecstasy—
I wondered what the end would be—what next should meet mine eye;
I knew not how we journey'd thro' the pathless fields of light,
When suddenly a change was wrought, and *I was clothed in white!*

We stood before a city's walls most glorious to behold;
We pass'd thro' gates of glittering pearl, o'er streets of purest gold;

It needed not the sun by day, the silver
moon by night;
The glory of the Lord was there, the
Lamb himself its light.

Bright angels paced the shining streets,
sweet music filled the air,
And white-robed saints, with glittering
crowns, from every clime were there;
And some that I had loved on earth
stood with them round the throne,
"All worthy is the Lamb!" they sang,
"the glory his alone."

But, fairer far than all beside, I saw
my Saviour's face;
And, as I gazed, he smiled on me with
wondrous love and grace.
Lowly I bow'd before his throne, o'er-
joy'd that I at last
Had gain'd the object of my hopes—
that earth at length was past.

And then, in solemn tones, he said,
"Where is the diadem
That ought to sparkle on thy brow—
adorned with many a gem?
I know thou hast believed in me, and
life through me is thine;
But where are all those radiant stars
that in thy crown should shine?

"Yonder thou seest a glorious throng,
and stars on every brow;
*For every soul they led to me they wear
a jewel now;*
And such *thy* bright reward had been,
if such had been thy *deed*,
If thou hadst sought some wand'ring
feet in paths of peace to lead.

"I did not mean that thou shouldst
tread the way of life *alone;*
But that the clear and shining light
which round thy footsteps shone
Should guide some other weary feet to
my bright home of rest,
*And thus, in blessing those around, thou
hadst thyself been blessed.*"

The vision faded from my sight, the
voice no longer spake,
A spell seem'd brooding o'er my soul,
which long I feared to break;
And when at last I gazed around in
morning's glimmering light,
My spirit fell o'erwhelmed beneath that
vision's awful might.

I rose, and wept with chastened joy
that yet I dwelt below,
That yet another hour was mine my
faith by works to show;
That yet some sinner I might tell of
Jesus' dying love,
And help to lead some weary soul to
seek a home above.

And now, while on the earth I stay, my
motto this shall be,
"To live no longer to myself, but Him
who died for me!"
And graven on my inmost soul this
word of truth divine,
"*They that turn many to the Lord bright
as the stars shall shine!*"

Words of Wisdom for Christian People.

THE RIGHT END OF THE SKEIN.

MRS. MORRIS had passed a delightful Sabbath. It had closed a week, every day of which had been devoted to special religious offices by the church to which she belonged; and each day, by its prayers, its sermons, and its hymns, had lifted her as by successive wave on wave, to a higher and still serener height of religious enjoyment. Seated now in the calm twilight of the Sabbath, she reviewed the week, as from some serene height the traveller looks over an evening landscape. Never had she seemed to herself to have risen to calmer regions of the spiritual life. The world of common interests and petty cares, all that ever had distracted or wearied her, seemed to lie far below her feet, as a faintly remembered dream. There seemed no longer to be any trouble she could not endure, any cross she could not easily carry. The year had been marked with disappointment and bereavement; but now the yearning of bereavement was still; a celestial light seemed to gild even that distant grave over which she had shed so many tears. "Yes," she said to herself, in a sort of inward rapture,

"at last the mystery of sorrow begins to explain itself, and God's will and my will have become one. This great peace is worth all it cost."

In the midst of all this peace she was conscious of a sort of shuddering aversion at the thought of Monday. Mother of a large family, pressed with a thousand daily and hourly calls, she felt the repugnance to pass from the serene spiritual regions of tranquil thought to the coarse commonplace of life. Then, too, she was a woman of sensitive nerves, quick to feel the jar and shock of aught that was jarring. Ah, she sighed, if it were only my duty to listen and to adore, if the worship and services of a holy week like this might be perpetual, if I could be in some serene, calm retreat, where selected souls worship perpetually, surely, I might almost live without sin for ever.

But Monday rose—bright, positive, sharp, worldly Monday—most Martha-like of all days of the week; and with it came burned toast and washy coffee for breakfast, to the manifest discomfort of the masculine head of the family; and when inquiry was made into causes, came back the message, "Cook says she is not going to get the breakfast washing-days, any more. Them as wants it must get it themselves."

The second girl in the staff, from whose unpractised hands originated the defective articles, was sure it wasn't her place to get it; and in general the week was ushered in in as uncomfortable a manner as possible; and Mrs. Morris, being thoroughly discomposed, lost patience, and spoke several sharp words all around;—the celestial peace was broken. The domestic trouble was, after a while, smoothed over and arranged; but she was vexed with herself, and somewhat vexed that she should be met in the very outset of the week by such a mortification.

In the course of the forenoon came in Miss Martha Bright Body, the general factotum of all the benevolent arrangements and sewing societies of the church, to hold a consultation with Mrs. Morris; and, as is very apt to be the case with those excellent people who gather a handful of seed out of everybody's vineyard, she dropped some grains of strife here and there among her good seed.

"Do you know, Mrs. Morris," she said, "Mrs. Brown said she thought you hadn't shown good judgment in buying those calicoes? She said you gave too much a yard by three cents. I stood up for you. For my part, I think Mrs. Brown always wants to have the lead in everything herself; and then Mrs. Simpkins said you didn't do your part in having the society meet at your house; and I put 'em in mind how you'd been afflicted, and all that. I always stand up well to 'em, I can tell you;" and then came another half-hour of talk, and the good soul went away, leaving the sting of two nettle strokes to inflame in her listener's heart.

"Why should I mind it?" she said to herself a dozen times that day; but she *did* mind it. It came between her and her peace, and often hung on her with a vague sense of something disagreeable, even when she put it out of her mind.

It would seem as if the week, so inauspiciously begun, was fated to poor Mrs. Morris. Her cook was in one of those surly periods to which the minds of most human beings are often subject, and nobody can say why cooks shouldn't be allowed their ill-humour sometimes, as well as their betters; at all events, Mrs. Morris's head-woman had such phases, which were only borne in peace because of her general honesty and ability. The second girl, a new hand, was well-meaning, but blundering, and succeeded on Tuesday in breaking an elegant cut-glass dish, which had come down as an heir-loom to Mrs. Morris, from her mother's family. Had it been the death of a child, Mrs. Morris would have borne the stroke like an angel; but as it was only her best glass dish, she thought she did well to be angry, and was angry accordingly. In short, so many mischances happened in this luckless week that, when Sunday came again, she seemed to herself like some chilled, shipwrecked mariner, who crawls, shivering, on to a rock to dry his wet garments, and look about him. What a difference between this Sunday and the last!

"How am I ever to make progress in religion?" she said to her old Aunt Martha, who had come to spend the day with her. "I really think if I

had nothing to do but attend on the means of grace; if we could have constant Sabbaths, and prayers, and hymns, I might endure; but each week's cares seem to wash out what Sunday does."

"*Daughter!*" said Aunt Martha, "you haven't got hold of the *right end of the skein*. It won't unwind as you are doing it."

"Do tell me, then, what is the right end."

"The right way is to *call your crosses and your cares your means of grace*. They are better than prayers, and psalms, and hymns, when you take them in that way. Your means of grace, this week, have been your servants' ill tempers; the breaking of your glass dish; your children's heedlessness; the little, unjust, provoking things people have said of you. Call these your means of grace, accept, value, use them as such, and you will grow faster in religion than if you went to church every day of the week."

Mrs. Morris was silent. A whole new vein of thought was awakened within her.

"Now," said Aunt Martha, "have you told your Father in heaven all these things you have been telling me?"

"These things! O, no! It has been my object to keep such trifles out of my mind in my prayers."

"Better let them in, and show them to him."

"These little foolish things?"

"It seems they are great enough to hinder your peace; to stand in the way of your Christian life; if they can do *that*, they are not little things. Call them your lessons; take them into your prayers; speak freely to your Father of them; look at them as the daily tasks he sets you; believe every one of them has an appointed meaning; and no church or sermon can do so much for you. My child, I had not been alive this day, if I had not learned to do this."

Mrs. Morris knew that her aunt had been through the long trial which only the wife of a drunkard knows, and yet the peace of God was written in every line of her face, and these few words showed the secret of that peace. She resolved that the next week she would try and begin the skein at the right end.

Good friend, if your life-skein will not wind smoothly, try the same experiment, and God will bless it to you. —*Mrs. H. B. Stowe.*

Narratives, Anecdotes, &c.

A PUZZLE SOLVED.

"I DON'T see why there are no conversions in our Sabbath school," said Mr. Mills to his wife, as they sat with their little family around the tea-table one quiet Sabbath evening.

"I am sure the school has never been more prosperous than since you took the charge of it," she replied.

"Prosperity is not always spirituality," said Mr. Mills.

"It has nearly doubled its numbers, and you have secured a very capable set of teachers, and have given them the example of great punctuality in attendance," replied the wife.

"Yes, I have not been absent from my post one Sabbath during the year. The teachers and scholars are faithful and prompt in their attendance; the lessons are well studied; and to a stranger the school would appear all that could be wished. But I cannot feel that we are realizing the results of our labour unless we see the dear children and youth coming to Christ. Good seed has been sown: but it does not spring up and bear fruit as I expected. I am puzzled to account for it."

"Papa," said little Charlie, who had listened only to the last sentence of the conversation, "hasn't your seed come up?"

"No, my child."

"Was the seed good, papa?"

"Yes, Charlie, the very best."

"Was it sowed in the spring, when the ground was tender, papa?"

"It certainly was, my son."

Charlie paused a moment and thought. He had a tiny garden which he called his own. His father had prepared the ground and given him a few choice seeds, and told him how to take care of them. The little boy had followed his father's directions, and was now rejoicing in the success of his labour. Hence his earnest questions and thoughtful brow. But he was not long in solving the question—to his own satisfaction, at least.

"Oh, papa," he at length said, "you have not watered it enough. When I planted my garden you told me my seed was good, and if I sowed it when the ground was tender, and watered it well, it would come up. And when we had that dry time, last June, you said I must water it every day, and I did. It must be, papa, that you have not watered yours enough."

"Charlie is right," said his father, to whom the artless words of his little boy had brought a needed reproof. "I have sown good seed in my moral garden, it is true; but I have relied too much upon the quality of the seed, and the favourable circumstances of the planting, and have sadly neglected to water it with the tears of supplication. Even the precious seed of divine truth, though sown in the spring-time of life and in the tender heart of childhood and youth, will not spring up unless watered by the Spirit in answer to fervent prayer. Henceforth, God helping me, I will not labour less, but I will pray more."

Is not here a lesson for the parent, the Sabbath school teacher, the minister of the Gospel, and every worker in the vineyard of the Lord?

GIVE THANKS.

A young lawyer had left his prosperous profession in a distant city, and gone home to die. A lingering disease, terrible to endure, was fastened upon him, and he knew that death was certain. No medical skill, no kind care, could save him; but he looked forward to the "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens;" and through the long summer months he lived and suffered patiently, shedding abroad the gentle influences of a meek and lowly spirit.

When the autumn came, and the flowers faded before its chilling blasts, a group gathered about young C——'s bed, to see him die,—a *father*, going down life's hill-side, and yet far from the kingdom of heaven; a mother, toiling, praying, hoping on, whose heart was wrung with anguish by the sufferings of her youngest born; a dearly loved brother; and the pastor whose frequent presence had lighted the sick-room.

The time had come to say farewell; the "dark river" was just at hand. Turning to his brother, the dying one said, "Charles, with what joy shall I haste to meet you, when you come!" Then, raising his eyes to his father's face, he said solemnly, "Father, 'Marvel not that I say unto you, ye must be born again.'" Then to his precious mother, "Mother, when I am gone, you will close my eyes, won't you?—Farewell." Turning to his pastor, he said, "Mr. H——, when this is over, give *thanks*."

These words were his last on earth. The poor body, distorted with pain, no longer imprisoned his free spirit; for that had gone to meet Jesus.

Mourning one, look up and "give thanks." Your Christian friend is happier far than ever before; then give thanks. Weary one, oppressed by bitter trials, give thanks. Remember, the hotter the furnace in which the silver is purified, the more brightly it reflects the image of the refiner who watches beside it. Even so you, purified in the furnace of affliction, will reflect more perfectly the image of your Father which is in heaven, and when the time comes for you to lie down and die, you will be ready, like young C——, to cry, "Give thanks, oh, *give thanks*."

"NAE STRIFE UP HERE."

It is related that an old Scotch elder had once a serious dispute with his minister at an elders' meeting. He said some hard things, and almost broke the minister's heart. Afterwards he went home, and the minister went home too. The next morning the elder came down, and his wife said to him—"Ye look very sad, Jan; what is the matter with ye?" "Ah," he replied, "you would look sad, too, if you had had such a dream as I have. I dreamed I had been at the elders' meeting, and had

said some hard things, and grieved the minister; and when he went home I thought he died and went to heaven. And I thought afterwards that I died too, and went up to heaven; and when I got to the gates of heaven, out came the minister, and put out his hands to take me, saying, 'Come along, Jan! there's nae strife up here—I am happy to see ye.'"

The elder went to his minister directly to beg his pardon, and found he was dead. The elder was so stricken by the blow, that two weeks after he also departed. "And I should not wonder," said he who related the incident, "if he did meet the minister at heaven's gate and hear him say, 'Come along, Jan! there's nae strife up here.'"

Ah, no, they never quarrel in heaven; and when we let our feelings get on fire here, and use harsh words, and bitterness and malice cling to our hearts, we have not got the Gospel spirit. The spirit that should belong to the church on earth is the same spirit of love that rules in heaven.

A Page for the Young.

THE HONEST BOY:

WHAT HE WAS, WHAT HE DID, AND WHAT HE BECAME.

A POOR BOY, about ten years of age, entered the warehouse of the rich merchant, Samuel Richter, in Dantzic, and asked the book-keeper for alms.

"You will get nothing here," grumbled the man, without raising his head from his book; "be off!"

Weeping bitterly, the boy glided towards the door, at the moment that Herr Richter entered.

"What is the matter here?" he asked, turning to the book-keeper.

"A worthless beggar boy," was the man's answer, and he scarcely looked up from his work.

In the meanwhile, Herr Richter glanced towards the boy, and remarked that, when close to the door, he picked something from the ground. "Ha! my little lad, what is that you picked up?" he cried. The weeping boy turned, and shewed him a needle.

"And what will you do with it?" asked the other.

"My jacket has holes in it," was the answer, "I will sew up the big ones."

Herr Richter was pleased with this reply, and still more with the boy's innocent, handsome face. "But are you not ashamed," he said, in a kind, though serious tone, "you so young and hearty, to beg? Can you not work?"

"Ah, my dear Sir," replied the boy, "I do not know how, and I am too little yet to thresh, or fell wood. My father died three weeks ago, and my poor mother and little brothers have eaten nothing these two days. Then I ran out in anguish and begged for alms. But alas! a single peasant only gave me yesterday a piece of bread; since then I have not eaten a morsel."

It is quite customary for beggars by trade to contrive tales like this; and this hardens many a heart against the claims of genuine want. But this time, the merchant trusted the boy's honest face. He thrust his hand into his pocket, drew forth a piece of money, and said:—

"There is half a crown; go to the baker's, and with half the money buy bread for yourself, your mother, and your brothers, but bring back the other half to me."

The boy took the money, and ran joyfully away.

"Well," said the surly book-keeper, "he will laugh in his sleeve, and never come back again."

"Who knows?" replied Herr Richter. And, as he spoke, he beheld the boy returning, running quickly, with a large loaf of black bread in one hand, and some money in the other.

"There, good Sir!" he cried, almost breathless, "there is the rest of the money." Then, being very hungry, he begged at once for a knife, to cut off a piece of bread. The book-keeper reached him in silence his pocket-knife.

The lad cut off a slice in great haste, and was about to bite upon it. But

suddenly he bethought himself, laid the bread aside, and, folding his hands, rehearsed a silent prayer. Then he fell to his food with a hearty appetite.

The merchant was moved by the boy's unaffected piety. He inquired after his family and home, and learned from his simple narrative that his father had lived in a village about four miles distant from Dantzic, where he owned a small house and farm. But his house had been burned to the ground, and much sickness in his family had compelled him to sell his farm. He then hired himself out to a rich neighbour, but, before three weeks were at an end, he died, broken down by grief and excessive toil. And now, his mother, whom sorrow had thrown upon a bed of sickness, was, with her four young children, suffering the bitterest poverty. He, the eldest, had resolved to seek for assistance, and had gone at first from village to village, then had struck into the high road, and at last, having begged everywhere in vain, had come to Dantzic.

The merchant's heart was touched. He had but one child, and the boy appeared to him as a draft at sight, which Providence had drawn upon him as a test of his gratitude. "Listen, my son!" he began, "have you, then, really a wish to learn?"

"Oh yes; I have indeed," cried the boy; "I have read the Catechism already, and I should know a great deal more, but at home I had always my little brother to carry, for mother was sick in bed."

Herr Richter suddenly formed his resolution. "Well, then," he said, "if you are good, and honest, and industrious, I will take care of you. You shall learn, have meat and drink and clothing, and in time earn something besides. Then you can support your mother and brothers also."

The boy's eyes flashed with joy; but in a moment he cast them to the ground again, and said, sadly, "My mother all the while has nothing to eat."

At this instant, as if sent by Providence, an inhabitant of the boy's native village entered Herr Richter's house. This man confirmed the lad's story, and willingly consented to carry the mother tidings of her son Gottlieb, and food, and a small sum of money from the merchant. At the same time Herr Richter directed his book-keeper to write a letter to the pastor of the village, commending the widow to his care, with an additional sum enclosed for the poor family, and promising further assistance.

As soon as this was done, Herr Richter at once furnished the boy with decent clothes, and at noon led him to his wife, whom he accurately informed of little Gottlieb's story, and of the plans which he had formed for him. The good woman readily promised her best assistance in the latter, and she faithfully kept her word.

During the next four years Gottlieb attended the schools of the great commercial city; then his faithful foster-father took him into his counting-room, in order to educate him for business. Here, as well as there, at the writing-desk, as on the school-bench, the ripening youth distinguished himself, not only by his natural capacity, but by the faithful industry with which he exercised it. With all this, his heart retained its native innocence. Of his weekly allowance, he sent the half regularly to his mother until she died, after having survived two of his brothers. She had passed the last years of her life, not in wealth, it is true, but, by the aid of the noble Richter, and of her faithful son, in a condition above want.

After the death of his beloved mother, there was no dear friend left to Gottlieb in the world except his benefactor. Out of love to him he became an active, zealous merchant. He began by applying the superfluity of his allowance, which he could now dispose of at his pleasure, to a trade in Hamburg quills. When, by care and prudence, he had gained about thirty pounds, it happened that he found in his native village a considerable quantity of hemp and flax, which was very good, and still to be had at a reasonable price. He asked his foster-father to advance him fifty pounds, which the latter did with great readiness. And the business prospered so well, that, in the third year of his clerkship, Gottlieb had already acquired the sum of one hundred and fifty pounds. Without giving up his trade in flax, he now trafficked in linen goods, and the two combined made him, in a couple of years, about three hundred pounds richer.

This happened during the customary

five years of clerkship. At the end of this period, Gottlieb continued to serve his benefactor five years more, with industry, skill, and fidelity; then he took the place of the book-keeper, who died about this time; and three years afterward he was taken by Herr Richter as a partner into his business, with a third part of the profits.

But it was not God's will that this pleasant partnership should be of long duration. An insidious disease cast Herr Richter upon a bed of sickness, and kept him for two years confined to his couch. All that love or gratitude could suggest, Gottlieb now did to repay his benefactor's kindness. Redoubling his exertions, he became the soul of the whole business, and still he watched long nights at the old man's bedside, with his grieving wife, until, in the sixty-fifth year of his life, Herr Richter closed his eyes in death.

Before his decease, he placed the hand of his only daughter, a sweet girl of only two-and-twenty, in that of his beloved foster-son. He had long looked upon them both as his children. They understood him; they loved each other; and, in silence, yet affectionately and earnestly, they solemnized their betrothal at the bedside of their dying father.

In the year 1828, ten years after Herr Richter's death, the house of Gottlieb Bern, late Samuel Richter, was one of the most respectable in all Dantzic. It owned three large ships, employed in navigating the Baltic and North Seas, and the care of Providence seemed especially to watch over the interests of their worthy owner; for worthy he remained in his prosperity. He honoured his mother-in-law like a son, and cherished her declining age with the tenderest affection, until, in her two-and-seventieth year, she died in his arms.

Having no children of his own he took the eldest son of each of his two remaining brothers, now substantial farmers, into his house, and destined them to be his heirs. But, in order to confirm them in their humility, he often shewed them the needle, which had proved such a source of blessing to him, and bequeathed it as a perpetual legacy to the eldest son in the family.

It is but a few years since this child of poverty, of honest industry, and of misfortune, passed in peace from this world. His death was an exemplification of the old text: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace" (Ps. xxxvii. 37).—*From the German.*

Our Sunday Schools.

GOOD FOR NOTHING.

"GET away with ye, for an idle good-for-nothing thief!" exclaimed Mrs. Paton, as with an angry gesture she waved from her door a ragged, miserable lad who stood before it. "Never shall you be trusted with another errand by me! To take the biscuits out of the very bag! Don't tell me you were hungry; don't tell me you won't be after doing it again! I was ready, I was, to give you a chance, since I knew that you were a homeless orphan; but I'll not be taken in twice! Go, beg about the streets, or starve, or find your way to the workhouse or the jail! I wash my hands of you; I'll have nothing more to do with ye, I tell you; ungrateful and good for nothing as you are!" and, as if to give force to her words, Mrs. Paton slammed the door in his face.

Rob Barker turned away from the house with the look of a beaten hound. He knew that the reproaches of the woman were not undeserved, that he had not been faithful to his trust. Deprived, when a child, of his parents' care, brought up in the midst of poverty and vice, growing even as the weeds grow, uncared-for and unnoticed, save as something worse than useless, he seemed as if born to be trampled upon; he appeared to be bound by no kindly ties to the fellow-creatures who despised him. A feeling of savage despair was creeping over his soul.

"Ay, I'm a good-for-nothing, am I?"

Rob muttered, as with slouching gait he sauntered down the street, not knowing where to go, for all the world was alike to him, a desert without a home. Almost fiercely he looked at the passers-by, some on foot, some in carriages, some upon prancing steeds. "*They* are good for something," thought Rob; "*they* have their homes and their friends, their kind parents, their merry children. *They* are loved while they live, and sorrowed for when they die. But *I*, I have no one left on earth either to love or care for me, or miss me when I'm gone. Life is just one tough hard struggle; there's none will help me through it!"

Rob stopped at the corner of a street, leant against an iron lamp-post, and moodily folded his arms. The bare brown elbows were seen through the holes in his tattered sleeves. His worn-out shoes would hardly hold together.

"I say, you, won't you come in there?" said a voice just behind him. Rob started, he so little expected to be addressed, and turning half round he saw a pale boy, in clothes that were poor but not tattered, who pointed to a door close by, over which was written "Ragged School."

"I'm not wanted there," muttered Rob.

"Every one's welcome," said the little boy, "and it's better to be in a warm room than standing out here in the cold! I'm late, very late to-day, for I've been sent on an errand, but I think I'm in time for the little address; teacher, she always gives us a bit of a story at the end. I can't wait, but you'd better come in;" and with the force of this simple invitation, Sandy Benne—for such was the young boy's name—drew the half unwilling Rob within the door of the place.

Rob did not venture to do more than enter the low white-washed room, in which he heard the hum of many voices. A poor-looking room it was; its only furniture, rough benches; its only ornaments, a few hymns and texts in large letters fastened on the wall. Rob stood close by the door, a shy, almost sullen, spectator, watching the scene before him. The room was thronged with children—such children as, but for the Ragged School, would have been playing about in the streets, —little rough-headed urchins, who once had been foremost in mischief,—pale sickly boys who looked as if they had had no breakfast that morning. Seated, some on the benches, some on the floor, they were conning their tasks with a cheerful industry which might have shamed some of the children of the rich. But a few minutes after the entrance of Rob, at a signal given by the teacher, a tall fair lady in mourning entered, books and slates were put back in their places, the morning's lessons were ended, and the school looked like a bee-hive when the bees are about to swarm.

"Now we shall have the little address," whispered Sandy, who had kept an eye upon Rob; "the teacher is going to knock upon the floor with her parasol, and then won't we be quiet as mice!"

There was no need to call "silence;" two little raps upon the floor were enough to make every rough scholar go back to his seat in a minute, and remain there as still as a statue. All the young eyes were fixed on the teacher, the gentle, loving lady, who daily left her comfortable home to trudge, sometimes through rain, and snow, and sleet, to spend her time, her strength, and her health in teaching ragged children. Her voice was a little faint, for the lady was weary with her work, though never weary *of* her work; but her smile was kindly and bright, as she began her short address.

"I have promised to give you a story, my dear young friends," she began; "and as I am speaking in a Ragged School, and to those who are called Ragged Scholars, you will not be shocked or surprised if I choose for my subject—a rag."

The teacher's cheerful smile was reflected on many a young sunburnt face; *rags* were a theme on which most of the company felt perfectly at home, though few present, except poor Rob, actually wore the articles in question.

"On a miry road," continued the lady, "trodden down by hoofs, rolled over by wheels, till it became almost of the colour of the mud on which it was lying, lay an old piece of linen rag, which had been dropped there by a beggar. Nothing could be more worthless, and long it lay unnoticed, till it caught the attention of a woman who, with a child at her side, was picking her way over the crossing.

"'I may as well pick that up for my bag,' said the woman.

"'Oh, mother, don't dirty your fingers by picking up that rag!' cried the boy with a look of disgust; 'such trash is not worth the trouble of washing! It's good for nothing—just good for nothing; it is better to leave it alone!'

"'Let me judge of that,' said the woman; and, stooping down, she picked up the miry rag, all torn and stained as it was, and carried it with her to her home. There she carefully washed it, and put it with other pieces of linen in a bag; and, after a while, it was sold for a trifle to a manufacturer of paper.

"If the rag had been a living creature, possessed of any feeling, much might it have complained of all that it had then to undergo. It was torn to pieces, reduced to shreds, beaten till it became quite a pulp; no one could have guessed who looked at it then that it had ever been linen at all. But what, my young friends, was the end of all this washing, and beating, and rending? At length, a pure, white, beautiful sheet of paper lay beneath the manufacturer's hands: into this fair form had passed the rag which a child had called *good for nothing!*

"But the sheet was not to lie useless. Not in vain had it been made so white and clean. It was next carried to the press of a printer. There it was once more damped, so as better to receive an impression; then it was laid over blackened type (that is, letters cast in metal), and pressed down with a heavy roller, until every letter was clearly marked upon the smooth white surface. God's Holy Word had been stamped upon it, the sheet was to form a leaf of a Bible; such honour was given to the once soiled rag, which a child had called good for nothing!

"And where was the Bible to be? to what home and what heart was it to carry its message of mercy? It was bound, and gilded, and bought, and carried to the royal palace of the queen. The Bible lay in the sovereign's chamber, it was opened by the sovereign's hand; her eye rested upon it as upon that which was more precious than her crown! What was it to her that a portion of the paper had once been a worn-out rag, dropped by one of the meanest of her subjects? It had been washed, purified, changed; the Word of God had given it value; well might the queen prize and love it as her best possession upon earth.

"Dear friends," continued the lady, looking with loving interest on the listening groups before her, "can you not trace out now a little parable in my story? Need I explain its meaning? There have been some neglected ones in the world, as little cared for, as little regarded, as the rag which lay on the miry road. But who shall dare to say that even the soul most stained by sin, most sunk in evil, is *good for nothing?* Such souls may be raised from the dust; such souls *have* been raised from the dust. While God spares life we may yet have hope. I have just read of the case of James Stirling, a faithful servant of God. That man for twenty years was a drunkard, a grief to his wife, a disgrace to his family, an evil example to those around him. If he, by the power of God's Word, was raised from such a depth of sin, who now need despair that is brought to Jesus? What if our sins be many before God, *the blood of Jesus Christ his Son can cleanse from all sin.* The soiled may be made pure and clean. What did the Saviour say to the weeping penitent whom all the world despised? *Thy sins are forgiven thee, go in peace.* And thus speaks the merciful Lord to the lowly penitent still.

"And when a soul is washed from its guilt, it is not left to be idle and useless. When God gives to a sinner a *new heart*, it is that his Holy Word may be deeply stamped on that heart. Then those who have been cleansed, forgiven, and raised, bear to others the blessed message which they have received. *Come, hear what the Lord has done for my soul. O taste and see that the Lord is good.* Such are the Bible words, printed, as it were, on the heart of every pardoned sinner, who, having been forgiven much, loveth much.

"And once more, dear friends, let me refer to the leaf of the Bible described in my little story, as a picture of a soul redeemed. It, too, will one day be borne to a palace; not the dwelling of an earthly monarch, but the mansion of the King of kings! Precious will it be in his eyes, and counted among his treasures. Oh, what a joyful, glorious end may be reserved for some whom the world calls *good for nothing,*

when penitent, pardoned, purified spirits shine as stars in the kingdom of heaven!"

The lady ceased, but her words seemed to echo still in the ears of poor Rob. He stood fixed to the spot where he stood, scarcely conscious of the bustle around him as the scholars noisily quitted the room. A door of hope had been suddenly opened before the almost despairing lad, a gleam of light had fallen on his darkness. Rob Barker had read the history of his own past life in that of the trampled rag; could a like future be before him? could he ever be one of the "penitent, pardoned, purified" ones, who shall shine at last like the stars?

The teacher's attention had been attracted by the wretched appearance and earnest look of the stranger lad. A feeling of interest and pity made her watch him, as he lingered in that room in which he had first learned that it was possible for such as he to be saved. As Rob walked slowly from the place, the lady overtook him, asked his name, and inquired what had brought him to the ragged-school that morning.

"I believe that God brought me," murmured Rob, and his answer came from his heart.

"Where do you live?" said the lady.

"I have no home, no friends," replied the lad, in a tone of gloomy despair.

"You are young, you look strong and active, you must never give up hope," said the teacher; "God is able to help. Let us see if no way can be found by which you can earn your bread as an honest lad should do."

The lady herself did something, perhaps to some it may seem very little, to aid the poor homeless lad; she had many poor to think of, many claims on her purse. She gave but a stale roll, an old broom, and the means of procuring a single night's lodging, together with an invitation to come every day and learn at the ragged-school. This was but a small and humble beginning to Rob's new start in life. I am not going to trace his career through all its various stages. He was the crossing-sweeper, the errand-boy, the lad ready for any message or any work, cleaning boots, putting up shutters, carrying parcels to earn a few pence or some broken victuals. Life was a struggle to Rob, as it is a struggle to many who, when they rise in the morning scarcely know where they will lie down at night. He was learning to be honest and sober, and gradually the sky brightened over Rob; his character became known and trusted, and greater prosperity came. Rob entered service, and rose in it; he remained for nearly twenty years under the same kind master, then with his honest earnings set up in business, and prospered. Rob lived to be known and respected in the world as a good husband, father, and master. He lived to be useful in the station of comfort and honour to which God's mercy had raised him, and to look forward with humble hope and rejoicing to the changeless glories of heaven.

Such was the career of one who had once been deemed *good for nothing* by a fellow-sinner! Pity, and try to help the poor outcasts!—*The Little Gleaner.*

Our Associations.

OXFORDSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The sixty-second meeting of this Association was held at Stow-on-the-Wold, on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, May 30th, 31st, and June 1st. There were present at the meetings sixteen ministers and twenty-five representatives from the twenty-five churches composing the Association. The first meeting for business was at three o'clock on the Monday, the Rev. F. F. Medcalf, acting as moderator. After singing, the Rev. T. Eden offered prayer. The Revs. J. Allen, B.A., Hook Norton; S. Hodges, Stow-on-the-Wold; T. Hughes, Woodstock; J. J. Brown, Cirencester, having become pastors in the Association during the year, were very cordially welcomed by resolution; and another resolution was passed expressive of high esteem for the private and ministerial character of the Rev. W. T. Henderson, who has removed to Devonshire Square, and the Rev. J. Wassall, who has gone to the United States, and

of fervent wishes for their continued success. The Rev. William Allen, Oxford, was elected secretary, and W. Cubitt, Esq., Banbury, treasurer. The standing committee gave a report of their endeavours to revive the church at Lechlade, and arrangements were made for continuing the effort. The constitution of the standing committee was altered so that it will in future consist of three ministers and three not in the ministry. The Rev. B. Arthur, of Coate; the Rev. A. W. Heritage, of Naunton; the Rev. G. McMichael, B.A., of Bourton-on-the-Water; and Messrs. R. Comely, Cundicutt; J. W. Comely, Oddington; and Belcher, Blockley, were chosen to constitute the committee. On the recommendation of the standing committee of the past year it was determined to divide the Association into three conferences, the present standing committee to meet each conference in the course of the year, and to report to the next Association. The Rev. G. McMichael was appointed to preach the Association sermon next year, and the Rev. H. J. Lambert to write the Letter. The Association will meet next year at Cirencester. On the Wednesday morning a prayer-meeting was held in the chapel. At half-past nine the Rev. F. F. Medcalf read the draft of a Letter, which was accepted with thanks to the writer, and ordered to be printed. At half-past ten the rotation sermon was preached by the Rev. B. Arthur, of Coate, followed by the Association sermon by the Rev. J. Davis, of Arlington. At three p.m. the letters from the churches were read, showing a decrease of twenty-seven members in the year, but of this number ten had withdrawn to form a separate church. Notwithstanding this decrease the churches appear to be active, vigorous, and hopeful. The Rev. A. W. Heritage addressed the meeting on the state of the churches. In the evening a public meeting was held, presided over by the pastor of the place. Devotional services were conducted by several brethren, and addresses were delivered by the Rev. W. Allen, on "Our forms of worship, and how they should be conducted"; by the Rev. G. McMichael, on "Hindrances to the prosperity of churches"; and the Rev. A. W. Heritage, on "Christian manliness." On Wednesday morning an open conference of the brethren was held, and the following subjects were discussed:—"The best mode of evangelising the neighbouring districts"; and, "The propriety of benefit clubs in connection with our chapels." The following resolution was unanimously passed:—"That this meeting rejoices in the success attending the extra efforts put forth by the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society at the latter end of their financial year, to prevent what appeared to be almost inevitable, viz., a large deficiency and consequent heavy debt on the Society; they consider the liberal response made to the application a proof that the missionary spirit of the churches only requires to be called forth, to make such a permanent increase to the Society's funds as shall be worthy of the denomination and lead to the extension of the agency employed; and they urge all the members of the associated churches to let the cause of missions have a larger share of their contributions and prayers." The meetings were greatly affected by the extremely unfavourable weather, but were, nevertheless, well attended, and the meetings year by year grow in interest and usefulness. The arrangements of the friends for the entertainment of the Association were excellent, and cordial and unanimous thanks were given them.

MIDLAND ASSOCIATION.—The meetings of the Midland Association—an Association over whose history more than 200 years have passed—were held in Whitsun week at Dudley. Stirring subjects were mooted, and considerable interest was excited. Of course there were preaching services, and three excellent sermons were preached by Messrs. Chapman and W. L. Giles, of Birmingham, and by Mr. Bird, of Stourbridge. The Baptist Union, Associations, those prominent subjects now, with ministers' societies, and individual duties of Christians, all came under notice. There were evidently yearnings for a consolidated, strong, practical Baptist confederation. Perhaps the Baptist Union had not reached the ideal of some minds. But might it not?—had the churches fed it as they should?—might they not make it what they thought it ought to be? were questions elicited. Some glances too were made towards some connection between the Associations and the Union. Might not the Associations be in some way affiliated with the Baptist Union, so as that the influence of the churches should pass through the Associations to the Union, and make its acts representative? Our Associations were not considered too large for management; rather the question was asked, In these days of iron roads could not two or even three of them be united? So important was the question of the efficiency of Associations felt to be, and of the Midland in particular, that it was determined to omit one

of the sermons next year, that there may be time for a fuller discussion of the subject. Understanding that the Baptist Union have some thought of holding an autumnal meeting, the brethren were anxious that it should be held in their neighbourhood. Feeling themselves incompetent to decide for any town, they passed the following resolution: "That the Association cordially recommends that the Baptist Union be invited to hold an autumnal meeting at Birmingham, and promises to do what it can to make a meeting successful: that a consultation on the subject be held with the friends at Birmingham, and that the matter be referred to the committee of the Association." The Society for Aged and Infirm Baptist Ministers, their Widows and Orphans, came under notice. One of the secretaries of the Society stated that its rules had been examined by an eminent London actuary—that several interviews had taken place between a sub-committee appointed by the Baptist Union, and several gentlemen deputed by the committee of the Society—that certain modifications agreed upon at that conference had been accepted by the committee, and would no doubt be accepted by the membership—that the only thing needed to make the Society thoroughly efficient was that the public should liberally supplement the payments of the brethren who are the members of it, and that for this purpose the committee proposed to make a renewed and strenuous appeal. The feeling of the Association embodied itself in the following resolution:—"That the Association rejoices in the existence of the National Society for Aged and Infirm Baptist Ministers, and their Widows and Orphans, and in the comfort which it has already carried to several saddened homes; that it recommends the Society to the help of the churches, and would suggest that collections, as far as practicable, would be one advisable plan for increasing its funds." The Circular Letter, on "Individual Christians responsible for the spread of Christian truth," was written by Mr. Evans, of Dudley, and is a forcible and earnest appeal to the churches. The increase of the churches is a considerable advance upon last year; being upon the gross increase of that year fully 25, and upon the clear increase over 30 per cent. The meetings were marked by a strong desire for practical result, and were pervaded by a spirit of hopefulness.

Western Association.—This Association held its forty-first annual meeting at Weymouth, on June 7th, 8th, and 9th. The proceedings commenced on Tuesday, the 7th, with a sermon to the young by the Rev. C. O. Munns, of Bridgwater, who took as his text, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" (2 Samuel xviii. 29). Prayer-meetings were held the two following mornings at seven o'clock, which were well attended, and at which addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Young, of Creech, and R. Stevens, of Bridport. The Rev. S. Pearce, of Crewkerne, preached on the Wednesday morning, at eleven o'clock, from the words, "The general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven" (Heb. xii. 23). In the afternoon the letters from the churches were read. These were almost all of a cheering character, and the clear increase reported was more than double that of the previous year, besides being more generally diffused. In the evening the Rev. H. V. H. Cowell, B.A., of Taunton, preached the Association sermon, on "Compassion for a perishing world," from Psalm cxix. 158, "I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved." The ordinance of the Lord's Supper was afterwards observed, the Rev. Joseph Price, of Montacute, presiding; and the Revs. E. Merriman, of Dorchester; R. James, of Yeovil; and E. Webb, of Tiverton, taking part. A collection was made for the Widows' Fund. A devotional service was held on the Thursday morning at eleven o'clock, when the Circular Letter was read by the Rev. E. Edwards, of Chard, on "The duty of our churches in relation to the unconverted of their respective districts." The Rev. E. Merriman afterwards read a report on the state of the churches, founded upon the letters. In the evening a Home Missionary meeting was held, at which J. B. Gifford, Esq., of Chard, presided. The report of the committee of the Baptist Western Home Mission was read by the Rev. E. Edwards; and addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Price, G. W. Humphreys, B.A., of Wellington, R. James, and E. Webb. A collection was made at the close of the meeting. The ministers and messengers and other friends supped together as usual on the Thursday night, and held a social meeting afterwards, which was much enjoyed. At the business meetings, which were held at ten o'clock on the Wednesday, and at nine and three o'clock on the Thursday, a resolution was passed expressing sympathy with W. D. Horsey, Esq., of Wellington, whose unusual absence was caused by illness and domestic affliction. Another resolution expressed affectionate esteem for the

Rev. Joseph Price, who resigned his office of secretary to the Association for the Foreign Mission, but consented to hold it till after the ensuing missionary meetings. The Baptist Foreign Mission was earnestly commended to the support of the churches, and a protest was adopted against the Attorney-General's bill for the increase of parishes. Various other resolutions of a more local character were passed. The public services of the Association were well attended, and deeply interesting. It is worthy of remark that the meeting of the Associations in Weymouth coincided with the jubilee of the Baptist chapel. A great improvement had been effected in the interior of the chapel in commemoration of its anniversary, by an entire re-pewing of the place, the erection of a convenient and tasteful platform in front of the pulpit, and an improved system of lighting. The friends at Weymouth were repeatedly and warmly congratulated on the success with which the alterations had been carried out.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—On Tuesday and Wednesday, May 17th and 18th, the ninety-ninth annual meeting of the ministers and messengers of the above Association was held at Hackelton—a village about five miles from Northampton, and rendered interesting as being the residence of Dr. Carey during some of his early years, where he followed his calling of a shoemaker, and preached his first sermon. On the Tuesday afternoon the members of the Provident Society met for the transaction of their business. During the past year £225 has been distributed amongst six claimants. For the ensuing year there is a seventh applicant for a share of this fund. It is intended to make a special application to the churches for pecuniary assistance, which it is hoped will be liberally granted. In the evening, at six o'clock, the ministers and messengers met for the transaction of business, the Rev. F. Timmis, of Olney, being moderator. The statistics of the churches were laid before the meeting by the secretary, the Rev. T. T. Gough, of Clipstone, who at the same time gave a summary of the result, which was of a discouraging kind, a decrease in the number of members being reported. The Circular Letter of the Association was read by the writer, the Rev. J. T. Brown, of Northampton, upon "The best means of meeting some of the difficulties of our position—first, as Christians; second, as Nonconformists." The letter was cordially and unanimously adopted by the meeting, and ordered to be printed. The subject for the next year's Circular Letter was decided to be, "The Centenary of the Association," the Rev. T. T. Gough being appointed to write it. On the Wednesday morning, at seven o'clock, a prayer-meeting was held, conducted by the moderator. At nine o'clock a meeting was held for the transaction of business and the distribution of the Association fund, when nearly £70 was distributed to twelve ministers requiring aid. At half-past ten the morning public services of the day were commenced, when the Rev. W. May, of Burton Latimer, preached an excellent sermon from Deut. i. 11. The Rev. C. White, of Long Buckby, also delivered a discourse founded on 1 John iii. 2. The ministers and messengers then retired for business (into the vestry), under the presidency of the moderator. The Rev. J. T. Brown brought before the meeting the desirableness of renewed efforts on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society. As the result of Mr. Brown's address, and the conversation of others, it was resolved that Mr. Phillips, the agent of the Society, should be invited to visit the churches in the county, to reorganise and stimulate the various juvenile and other societies in this district. Application was made through Mr. Brown on behalf of the church assembling in Grey-friars-street, Northampton, for readmission into the Association, which application was unanimously granted. In the afternoon the letters from the churches were read, the great bulk of which were of a cheering and encouraging character, although the result in the admission of members showed a decrease of fifteen in the Association. The closing public service was held at six o'clock, the chapel being crowded. The Rev. J. T. Brown, of Northampton, delivered an eloquent and powerful discourse from Rev. v. 9—13. The meetings of the Association, although not quite so numerously attended as usual, were characterised by a kindly feeling and warmth of love which has never been surpassed.

YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The meetings of this Association were held on the Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday in Whitsun week, at Port-Mahon Chapel, Sheffield. The ministers and messengers assembled at four o'clock on the Tuesday afternoon, and proceeded to the appointment of moderator and committees. After tea a fraternal conference was held, under the presidency of the Rev. J. P. Campbell, moderator, the sub-

ject being, "The Baptist Local Preacher; or how to bring out and efficiently employ the talent of the churches." The Rev. C. Larom gave the introductory address, and the Revs. D. Crumpton, Dr. Evans, S. G. Green, B.A., H. Watts, J. Hanson, W. Best, B.A., Messrs. Nicholls, Andrew, Ingham, and Whittaker, took part in the discussion. The early morning prayer-meeting on the Wednesday was conducted by the Rev. H. Watts, of Golcar, and was well sustained. At ten o'clock public worship was held, and the Rev. R. Holmes, of Rawdon, preached from Matt. v. 16, a discourse marked by great force and freshness, on "Practical Christianity." The sermon will probably be printed. The Circular Letter, on "Infant salvation," was read by the Rev. J. Hanson, of Huddersfield, and rarely has the annual epistle been received with more cordial approbation. A desire was expressed for its publication in a separate form, for general circulation. In the afternoon the letters from the churches were read, with the statistical returns, which showed that above 500 had been added by baptism during the year, and 200 by letter and restoration. The losses had, however, reduced the net increase apparently to 96; but in reality the clear gain was 271, as no fewer than 175 had been dismissed to form new churches, whose returns could not, according to the usages of the Association, be received till next year. On the Wednesday evening the annual meeting of the Itinerant Society was held, Dr. Acworth presiding. The Rev. J. Barker, secretary, read the report, and addresses were given by Messrs. A. J. Ashworth and W. C. Upton; and by Messrs. W. Stead and J. Cooke. On the Thursday morning the early prayer-meeting was conducted by the Rev. D. Crumpton, and at the public service in the forenoon the Rev. A. Bowden, of Driffield, preached an excellent sermon from Acts xiv. 3, on "The Gospel; its Divine attestation and its claims." This service was followed by the annual meeting of the Loan Fund Society. In the afternoon a very interesting business meeting was held, when it was agreed to hold an autumnal conference this year, at Driffield. The place appointed for the next Association is Halifax. Resolutions relating to denominational institutions and civil questions were adopted, and the churches at York and Salterforth were admitted into the Association. During the proceedings, Mr. Oncken, of Hamburg, entered the assembly, and was received with great cheering. He afterwards delivered a thrilling address on the operations of our Baptist brethren in Germany. In the evening the concluding service was held in Townhead Street Chapel, when the Rev. W. Best, B.A., of Leeds, preached a sermon of much beauty and power, which helped to deepen the good impression previously made. The attendance at all the gatherings was very good, especially considering that the place of meeting this year was at the southern extremity of the county. Some brethren travelled as far as 80 miles to be present, and felt well repaid for their trouble.

NORTHERN ASSOCIATION.—The annual services of the above Association were held on Monday and Tuesday, May the 16th and 17th, at Middleton-in-Teesdale. On the Monday morning at eleven o'clock a prayer-meeting was conducted. At half-past two p.m., the letters from the churches were read; from these it appeared that the increase of members was less during the past year than for the last three or four years. In the evening, at half-past six, the Association sermon was preached by the Rev. P. W. Grant, of Darlington, from Dan. vii. 18. At seven o'clock on the Tuesday morning the brethren again assembled for prayer. At ten, the Rev. J. D. Carrick, of North Shields, preached from 1 Cor. ix. 27. At the close of the sermon, the Rev. W. Walters, of Newcastle, read the Circular Letter he had been requested to write on "The relation of the Sunday School to the Church." In the afternoon, at two, the ministers and messengers met for business, the Rev. J. D. Carrick acting as moderator. The Rev. W. Walters was requested to continue his services as secretary. Resolutions were adopted, thanking Messrs. Grant and Carrick for their excellent sermons, and Mr. Walters for his Letter, and wishing him to allow it to be printed, both with and without the minutes of the Association, for circulation among the churches; fixing the next Association at Hartlepool; appointing the Rev. W. Fawcett to write the Circular Letter on "The importance and best methods of securing the conversion of the young people in our congregations, especially such as are the children of godly parents"; commending the Rev. G. Whitehead, who has recently left the district, to the confidence and esteem of his new friends; expressing satisfaction with the efforts of the Baptist Union to promote a more hearty co-operation among Baptist churches; appointing an autumnal meeting of the Association to be held at Newcastle; rejoicing in the labours and

success of the German Baptist Mission; recommending the Baptist Building Fund to the support of the churches; urging increased efforts in aid of the Baptist Foreign Missionary Society; impressing on the attention of the churches the importance of purchasing and reading our denominational literature; commending the case of the new chapel at Middlesborough to the sympathy and liberality of those whose pecuniary aid might be sought; setting apart the second Sabbath in June and the following day as days of humiliation and prayer throughout the Association, on account of the low state of religion in the churches; and thanking the moderator for his conduct in the chair, and the friends at Middleton for their Christian hospitality. At half-past six p.m., the annual meeting of the Northern Auxiliary to the Baptist Home Missionary Society was held. R. W. Bainbridge, Esq., of Middleton House, presided. The Rev. T. H. Pattison offered prayer. After the chairman had addressed the meeting, the secretary, the Rev. W. Walters, presented the annual report, and, in the absence of the treasurer, read also his account. The meeting was then addressed by the Revs. J. H. Lummis, W. Bontems, G. V. Barker, W. Fawcett, and W. McPhail, and Messrs. Peachey and H. Angus. The Rev. W. Fawcett closed the service with the benediction.

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The twenty-seventh anniversary of this Association was held on Wednesday and Thursday, May 18th and 19th, in West Street Chapel, Rochdale. The attendance at all the services, and especially on the second day, was unusually large, owing partly to the very fine weather with which the neighbourhood was favoured. On the Wednesday morning a public prayer-meeting was held, at which the Rev. C. Williams presided, and the Rev. J. G. Oncken gave an address. At the afternoon meeting the Rev. E. C. Pike, B.A., was elected moderator. The Rev. F. Bugby presented a brief statistical report of the state of the churches, from which it appeared that the gain during the past year had been about 8 per cent. After the secretary's statement, the Rev. F. Trestrail (who with great kindness had consented to supply the place of the Rev. C. M. Birrell, absent through illness) delivered a very interesting address on the Baptist Foreign Mission, for which he received the unanimous thanks of the assembly, and which will, no doubt, have the happiest effect on the missionary contributions from Lancashire this year. In the evening the annual meeting of the County Home Mission was held, H. Kelsall, Esq., in the chair. Addresses were given by the Revs. C. Williams, J. G. Oncken, J. H. Gordon, of Astley Bridge, E. Morgan, of Crewe, and J. Paterson, of Sabden. On the Thursday morning, at half-past six, a public prayer-meeting, very numerously attended, was held, under the presidency of the Rev. S. H. Booth. At half-past ten, after the reading of the Scriptures, and prayer by the Rev. A. M. Stalker, the Rev. A. Maclaren preached from Psa. cxxxii., and the Rev. H. S. Brown read the Circular Letter he had prepared, on "The employment of women as home missionaries." In the afternoon the business meeting was held. The Rev. F. Bugby was re-elected to the office of secretary, with thanks for his past services. The Rev. H. S. Brown's Circular Letter was adopted, and he was requested to allow it to be issued in a separate form for general circulation. The invitation to hold the next meeting at Birkenhead was accepted, the Rev. C. Williams being appointed preacher, and the Rev. C. M. Birrell moderator. "Tests for church-membership" was chosen as the subject of the next Circular Letter, to be written by the Rev. S. G. Green, B.A., President of Rawdon College. After a statement by the Rev. C. Vince, of Birmingham, it was resolved, "That this Association, recognising the importance and the desirableness of a provision for aged and infirm Baptist ministers, and believing that the National Society is well calculated to accomplish this object, cordially commends it to the pastors and churches which compose the Association." In the evening the Rev. C. Vince read the Scriptures and offered prayer, the Rev. A. Mursell preached from 1 Cor. i. 22—24, and the moderator concluded with prayer. This anniversary will long be remembered as one of the most successful and delightful the associated churches of Lancashire have ever enjoyed.

HUNTINGDONSHIRE ASSOCIATION.—The third annual meeting of the Huntingdonshire Association of Christian Churches was held at Huntingdon, on Wednesday, June 1st. The day was fine, and a large number of ministers and delegates from the twenty-two Nonconforming churches of Christ composing the Association, together with several ministers and visitors from churches in Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, and Cambridgeshire, assembled on the occasion. The services commenced at half-past eleven o'clock, in the chapel, when devotional services were con-

ducted by the Revs. J. E. Simmons, Craig, Griffiths (Biggleswade), Wylie, Whiting, Grant, G. B. Thomas, and Manning, of Gamlingay; and a discourse was delivered by the Rev. J. H. Millard, B.A., on "The Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures." This discourse, distinguished for its eloquence, clearness, and the exhaustive treatment of the subject, was listened to by a large congregation, and in the course of the day an earnest desire was expressed for its publication. At two o'clock p.m., upwards of 200 ladies and gentlemen sat down to dinner in the Corn Exchange, Bateman Brown, Esq., president of the Association for the year, in the chair. A hearty vote of thanks was presented to Mr. Millard for his admirable sermon. At three o'clock p.m., a meeting for the transaction of business was held in Union chapel, at which reports from the churches were presented, and grants made to mission stations in the county, amounting to £95. The annual meeting for 1863 was appointed to be held at St. Ives; the annual sermon to be preached by the Rev. T. Lloyd, on "The voluntary principle as illustrated in the history of the Christian Church." T. Coote, Esq., of Fenstanton, was appointed president and treasurer, and the Revs. T. Lloyd and G. B. Thomas, secretaries, for the ensuing year. At five o'clock p.m., between 500 and 600 persons partook of tea under two marquees, kindly lent by P. Brown, Esq.; and at six o'clock the company adjourned to the Corn Exchange, where a public meeting was held, under the presidency of Bateman Brown, Esq. The well-proportioned room, which was elegantly decorated with flowers and flags, was completely filled with ladies and gentlemen from all parts of the county, and who, after singing and prayer by the Rev. S. Fordham, of Caxton, were addressed by the president, on "Truth, union, and progress," as the distinctive watchwords of Christian nonconformity; by the Rev. T. Lloyd, on "The scope which Huntingdonshire presents for evangelical effort"; by T. Coote, Esq., on "The duty and privilege of Christians to spread the Gospel"; and by the Rev. W. H. Wylie, on "The hindrances to the success of evangelising efforts." In its present form the Association now enters on the fourth year of its existence; it has just distributed £95 for the help of six stations, where great good is being done; and no doubt this fact will stimulate to greater effort those who are interested in the objects for which the Association was formed.

PEMBROKE ASSOCIATION.—The above Association held its meetings at Newport on Wednesday and Thursday, the 8th and 9th of June. On the Wednesday, at ten, a conference was held in the chapel, when a large number of ministers and representatives from the churches of the district assembled, the Rev. T. Burditt, A.M., of Haverfordwest, in the chair. The secretary, the Rev. T. E. Thomas, of Blaenllyn, after reading the statistics for the year, said that the progress of the denomination in this district, compared with years past, presented a sad diminution, and urged on the conference the necessity of awakening into a spirit of earnest prayer for Divine influence in the churches. The appeal was received with profound interest by all who were present. The Rev. J. Jenkins, the minister of the place, then read a Circular Letter, which received the highest commendation. It was unanimously agreed that it be adopted by the conference, printed with the circular of the Association, and sent to all the churches of the district, with an earnest desire that it be prayerfully read and applied by all. An application from the church at Milford to be restored to the union, was cordially received. Several matters were further considered, and at one the conference was brought to a close. The public meeting commenced at two on Wednesday. The stage was erected in a commodious field by the sea shore. The weather was delightfully fine, the attendance very numerous, and all seemed intent upon hearing the Gospel. The service at two was introduced with reading and prayer, by the Rev. G. H. Roberts, of Tabor. The Revs. T. Jones, St. Dogmels, C. Price, of Blaenfos, and T. Williams, of Langlofan, then addressed the audience. At six, the Rev. Mr. Havard, of Sandersfoot, engaged in prayer, and the Revs. E. Edwards, of Nayland, J. Rowe, of Fishguard, and T. E. Thomas, of Blaenllyn, preached. On the Thursday morning, at seven, prayer having been offered by the Rev. J. Thomas, of Newport, two sermons were delivered by Revs. D. Phillips, of Groesgoch, and W. Roberts, of Penpark. At ten a fervent prayer was offered up by Rev. W. Reynolds, of Middlemill, and the crowded assembly was addressed by the Revs. T. Evans, of Delhi, J. Owen, of Liverpool (in English), and H. W. Jones, of Carmarthen. The Rev. B. Thomas, at two, offered prayer, and the assembly was addressed by the Revs. W. Lewis, of Dowlais, T. Burditt, of Haverfordwest, and T. Jones, of Neath. At six, the Rev. J. Williams, of Llwyndavydd, engaged in prayer, which was followed by three sermons, by the Revs. T. Griffiths, of Ebenezer, J. P. Davis, of Pancheston, and B. Thomas, of Newcastle

Emlyn. At the close, Mr. Jenkins, after presenting the thanks of the meeting to the various parties of all denominations that had rendered their kind assistance on the occasion, expressed an earnest wish to enjoy another such religious treat at Newport, and that in a short time.

HERTS AND BEDS ASSOCIATION.—The annual meetings of this Association were held at Rickmansworth, on the 8th and 9th of June; the Rev. W. Omant, moderator. Resolutions were passed thanking the Rev. W. Upton for his services as treasurer during a period of twenty-one years; electing J. Waller, Esq., of Luton, as his successor; re-electing the Rev. H. C. Leonard, M.A., as secretary; appointing that the next annual meetings shall be held at Wellington-street, Luton, the Rev. W. Fisk to preach the annual sermon, or in case of failure, the Rev. W. Omant, and that an autumnal meeting shall be held at Ridgmount; and inviting the church at Dunstable and the churches at Malden and Ampthill to join the Association, &c. The following resolutions were also passed:—"That this Association cordially commends the National Society for Aged and Infirm Baptist Ministers, their Widows and Orphans, to the notice and support of pastors and churches." "That this Association rejoices in the extension and increased efficiency of the Baptist Union, and recommends the churches to contribute separately a small sum annually to its funds." "That this Association gratefully recognises the goodness of God in the success that has attended the efforts of the churches to avert from the Baptist Missionary Society the financial difficulty with which it was threatened; and, whilst it records its sense of the liberality of the churches in this matter, urges upon them to continue their efforts, and, if possible, to give them a more systematic character, so as not only to prevent all future difficulty, but also permanently to augment the regular income of the Society." "That the associated churches shall be urged to send one or two delegates as messengers to the annual meetings of the Association." The Circular Letter, prepared by the Rev. T. Owen, on "The Younger Members of our Churches," was read and adopted. In the evening a prayer-meeting was held, when addresses were given by the Revs. T. Penn and T. W. Wake. On Thursday, June 9th, Divine service was conducted by the Rev. W. W. Evans, and the annual sermon preached by the Rev. W. D. Ellis-ton, from 1 John v. 4. The letters from the churches, which were read in the afternoon, showed an increase somewhat smaller than usual, but there were many indications that the churches were active and hopeful. In the evening, addresses were delivered by several of the pastors of the associated churches.

NORTH-WESTERN ASSOCIATION.—The annual meetings of this Association were held on Wednesday and Thursday, May 18th and 19th, in the Baptist chapel, Millgate, a station connected with the first Baptist church, Bacup. On the Wednesday afternoon, at two o'clock, the Rev. J. Smith, of Bacup, was chosen moderator, and the letters from the churches were read. These churches—fourteen in number—reported a total increase of 143, and a total decrease of 81, being a clear increase for the year of 67 members. The Rev. J. Howe then read the Circular Letter he had prepared, on "The preparation and employment of lay agency." The letter was subsequently received and ordered to be circulated as the letter of the Association. In the evening, at half-past six, after devotional exercises, conducted by the Rev. R. Berry (Independent), of Hall Fold, the Association sermon was preached by the Rev. J. Harvey, of Little Leigh, from Ezekiel xxxiv. 11, 12, and a collection made at the close on behalf of the Association Fund for the assistance of poor and weak churches. On the Thursday morning, at half-past seven, a prayer-meeting was held, in which several ministers and other brethren took part, and an address was delivered by the Rev. W. Gatenby from the words, "Brethren, pray for us." At half-past ten a public meeting was held, under the presidency of the moderator, and addresses were delivered by the Revs. J. Wilkinson, S. Sykes, and T. Dawson. In the afternoon the usual business meeting of the Association was held; the moderator in the chair. The churches at Brunswick-road, Liverpool, and at Norley, Cheshire, were received. The next annual meeting to be held at Waterbarn; the Rev. T. Durant to be the Association preacher, and the Rev. H. Hall to write the Circular Letter, on "The Duty of Believers to give according to their ability to the cause of Christ." The Rev. J. Howe was thanked for his past services as secretary, and re-elected to the same office for the next three years. The usual votes of thanks were accorded to the friends entertaining the Association, and also to the moderator for his conduct in the chair. In the evening, after reading and prayer by the Rev. H. Hall, a sermon was preached by the Rev. E. Parker, of

Farsley, from Rev. xii. 11, and the interesting services of the occasion were concluded with prayer by the Rev. J. Smith, of Bacup.

Old Welsh Association.—The annual meeting of the Association known as the "Old Association," comprising the counties of Montgomery, Radnor, and Brecon, was held on Wednesday and Thursday, June 1st and 2nd, in the Baptist chapel, Builth. At ten o'clock the first day, a large number of ministers and messengers of the respective churches met in conference at the chapel, when the Rev. E. Pryce, late of Crickhowell, was unanimously voted into the chair as moderator, and subjects of importance bearing upon the temporal and spiritual welfare of the denomination in these counties were discussed. The assembly adjourned at one o'clock, and all dined at the Temperance Hotel. The business of the meeting was resumed at two o'clock, and several resolutions connected with the future progress and good of the churches were mooted and passed. Breconshire was allowed to withdraw, and form a separate Association, &c. The public services were held in a field adjacent to the town, where a suitable platform was erected and rustic seats arranged for the occasion. At six p.m., the devotional part of the public service was conducted by the Rev. T. T. Phillips, Painscastle, when the Revs. G. Phillips, Evenjobb, and T. Evans, Newchapel (Welsh), preached. At seven o'clock on the Thursday morning, the service was held in the Independent chapel, when the Revs. Isaac Edwards, Llanidloes, and J. L. Evans, Soar, preached. A conference was held at the same time in the Baptist chapel. At ten a.m., in the field, the worship was introduced by the Rev. D. Evans, Knighton, after which the Revs. J. Jones, Rock; B. Watkins, Maesyberllan (Welsh); and E. Roberts, Newtown, preached. At two o'clock, the worship was commenced by reading and prayer by the Rev. D. Davies, Nantgwin; when the Revs. M. Morgan, Newwells; J. Vaughan, Staylittle (Welsh); and D. Davies, Dolan, preached. At six o'clock, the Rev. E. Owen, late of Sarn, read and prayed; the Revs. J. Jones, Maesyrhelem; W. H. Paine, Presteign; and J. W. Evans, Brecon, preached; and the Rev. D. Jarman, Newbridge, concluded by imploring the Divine blessing. The weather was all that could be desired, and the assemblage at the forenoon and afternoon services was immense. The preacher's voice, in its utmost strains, could scarcely reach the extremities of the multitude.

Shropshire Association.—The annual meetings of this Association were held at Wellington, on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 7th and 8th of June. At eleven a.m. on the Tuesday a goodly number of the ministers and messengers assembled in the new school-room belonging to the chapel, when upwards of an hour was spent in earnest supplication for the Divine presence in the ensuing meetings, and for peace and prosperity in the various churches composing the Association. The brethren again assembled at half-past two p.m., to receive the usual intelligence concerning the condition and prospects of the churches, and this intelligence was of such a character as to occasion general feelings of humiliation and sorrow, the additions to the churches being fewer than have been known for a great number of years. Pecuniary assistance was rendered to some of the smaller churches, and it was resolved to make an effort to secure collections next February in all the churches in the Association, and that the amount should be appropriated to the work of home missions in the county. A resolution was also passed to connect the Association with the Baptist Union. The preachers on the occasion were the Revs. J. E. Yeadon, of Whitchurch; F. Hemus, of Donnington; and R. C. Young, of Coseley, Staffordshire. The Circular Letter, on "Lay Agency," written by the Rev. J. E. Yeadon, was adopted, with the view of being printed and circulated among the churches. The Rev. E. Wilks, of Oswestry, was chosen preacher to the Association next year, and the Rev. T. How, of Shrewsbury, was requested to write the next Circular Letter, the subject to be, "The Duty of the Churches in reference to the Association." After listening to a statement from the Rev. R. C. Young, the brethren passed the following resolution, "That this Association recognises the value and importance to the denomination of the National Society for Aged and Infirm Baptist Ministers, their Widows and Orphans, and earnestly commends it to the kind and liberal aid of the churches and benevolent individuals." There was a good attendance at the various meetings; an excellent spirit pervaded them; and a general desire was manifest to work during the ensuing year in the service of the Redeemer with renewed energy and consecration.

Gloucestershire Association.—The annual meetings of this Association were held at Hereford on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 24th and 25th of May, the Rev. T. French, moderator. Meetings

for business were held on the Tuesday, at three p.m., and on the Wednesday, at a quarter past nine. Mr. Dangerfield was re-elected as treasurer, and the Rev. W. Collings as secretary, with thanks for past services. Meetings next year to be held at Chalford; Mr. French to preach, or, in case of failure, Mr. Hall. The Circular Letter to be written by Mr. Press. The church at Ledbury applied for readmission into the Association, which was unanimously granted. The home missionary committee was reappointed for the coming year, Dr. Batten being added to it. It was resolved that the churches receiving aid should be visited by some member of the committee during the year. A portion of the funds was also to be devoted to the holding of special services (if desired) in connection with any of the weaker churches. It was resolved—"That the churches be requested to forward their statistical account to the secretary a clear week before the annual meetings, with a view to the facilitating of business." "Resolved,—That the churches devote a portion of the first Lord's day in October to special prayer for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit." Grants, amounting in the whole to £65, were made to some of the smaller churches. The Circular Letter, upon the right of private judgment, prepared by Mr. Jones, was read. The public meetings were as follow:—On the Tuesday evening, at seven, after the reading of the Scriptures and prayer by Mr. Tayler, Mr. Overbury preached from Rev. ii. 1. On the Wednesday morning, at seven, a prayer-meeting was held; Mr. Ayers presided, and brethren Tayler, Fisher, Nicholson, Hester, Ridley, and Collings prayed. Mr. Hall gave an address. At eleven, after singing, Mr. Webb read and prayed, and Mr. Bullock, of Abergavenny, preached from Phil. i. 6. In the afternoon Mr. Smith read and prayed; the letters from the churches were read, when it was found that the increase of members was smaller than for some years. In the evening, at seven, addresses were delivered by Mr. Press and Mr. Mathews.

Devon Association.—The annual services of this Association were held at Honiton on the 14th, 15th, and 16th ult. They were attended, as usual, by a large number of ministers and messengers and other friends from various parts of the county. On Tuesday evening a sermon to the young was preached by the Rev. J. Kings, of Torquay. The discourse, which was founded on Ruth i. 16, was listened to with marked interest and attention by a large number of young persons. This service was followed by a prayer-meeting, at which the greater part of the congregation remained. On Wednesday morning, at seven o'clock, a prayer-meeting was held, when several very earnest prayers were offered, and an address given by the Rev. J. Taylor, of Ilfracombe. Perhaps the most important meeting was that which took place at eleven o'clock on Wednesday morning, when a paper on "Evangelistic Effort" was read by Mr. J. Holmden, of Plymouth. It is gratifying to report that as the result of this meeting and subsequent deliberations it was determined to employ an evangelist for the more destitute part of the county as soon as the right man for such a work can be found, and it is earnestly hoped the funds of the Association will soon be adequate to the employment of a large number of earnest men for home missionary work. On Wednesday evening a very eloquent sermon was preached by the Rev. T. Peters, of Kingsbridge; subject, "A deeper spirituality of mind the want of the churches." After this service the Lord's Supper was partaken of by a large number of communicants. On the Thursday morning the usual devotional service was held at seven o'clock, and at eleven o'clock the Circular Letter was read by the Rev. W. Foot, of Collumpton, subject, "The hearty co-operation of the members of our churches with their pastors essential to the prosperity of the Saviour's cause." The closing sermon was preached by the Rev. T. C. Page, of Plymouth, on Thursday evening, to a crowded congregation. It was truly gratifying to see the interest in these services sustained to the last, nor less so to observe the very harmonious and happy spirit which pervaded the brethren in all their public and social gatherings.

Worcestershire Association.—The annual meetings of this Association were held at Upton-on-Severn on Tuesday and Wednesday, the 7th and 8th of June. On the Tuesday, at twelve o'clock, there was a meeting for prayer. At three o'clock the ministers and messengers assembled for business. The Rev. J. Parker was chosen moderator. The Rev. M. Philpin was re-elected secretary and treasurer. The claims of the Baptist Union were considered, and the churches warmly recommended to subscribe to its funds through the secretary. The Rev. J. Horne read the Circular Letter, subject, "Christian Marriage," which was adopted for circulation. The following resolutions were unanimously passed:—1. "That while this Association earnestly sympathises with the Baptist Mission, and expresses its confidence in its

committee and officers, it desires also to express its conviction that country churches are not sufficiently represented in its committee, and suggests that each Association of churches be allowed to elect one or more members to sit upon the committee, and that the travelling and other expenses be met by the constituency." 2. "That this Association recommends the Bible Translation Society to the sympathy and support of our churches, and the individual members." 3. "That this Association recommends to the members of the churches of this Association the importance of cultivating the principle of weekly storing for, and giving to, God according as he prospers them." On Wednesday, at seven o'clock, there was a public prayer-meeting, conducted by the Rev. S. Dunn. At eleven o'clock, the Rev. W. Symonds preached the Association sermon, from 1 John iii. 2. At three o'clock, the letters from the churches were read, and a very appropriate address was given by the Rev. W. Radburn. The letters, though not reporting a large increase, were of a very cheering character, and some of them very encouraging. At six o'clock, the Rev. N. Haycroft, of Bristol, preached from Matthew xxvii. 54, and closed a series of specially interesting services with prayer.

NOTTINGHAM, DERBY, AND LINCOLN ASSOCIATION.—The annual meeting of this Association was held in the Baptist chapel, Agard-street, Derby, on Whit-Tuesday, the 17th of May. Assembled at half-past ten a.m., devotional services were conducted by the brethren Pike and Waller; after which the Rev. J. Baxandall, minister of the place, was chosen moderator. The letters from the various churches were read, and the statistics reported. The Rev. D. R. Joseph, of Burton-on-Trent, concluded the service with prayer. Reassembled at three o'clock p.m., the minutes of the last meeting and the treasurer's account were read and confirmed. The following resolutions, among others, were passed:—"That the recently-formed church at Chesterfield be admitted into this Association." "That the usual sum of £2 2s. be voted to the Baptist Union." "That the sum of £10 be voted to the minister of the church at Sutton-in-Ashfield for the present year." "That a committee be formed of the ministers and messengers of the churches in this Association to canvass their respective districts for an increase of funds to aid the Association in promoting the more efficient spread of the Gospel." "That the next Circular Letter be on 'The special purposes for which the Christian Church is formed,' and that the Rev. J. Baxandall be appointed to write it." "That the thanks of this meeting be presented to the Rev. J. Edwards, secretary, and to Mr. Turner, treasurer; and that they be requested to continue their services for the ensuing year." "That the autumnal meeting be held at Nottingham on the 11th of October next; and that the annual meeting be held at Burton-on-Trent on Whit-Tuesday, 1865." In the evening, at half-past six, a public meeting was held, when the Rev. J. Edwards read the Circular Letter he had prepared, on "The nature and constitution of the Christian church," and interesting addresses were delivered by the brethren Morton, Joseph, and Williams. The other devotional services were conducted by the brethren Morton, Wallis, Williams, &c.

SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION.—The annual meetings of this Association were held at Andover on the 7th and 8th of June. On Tuesday morning, at eleven o'clock, the ministers and messengers met, when the Rev. J. B. Brasted was chosen moderator; but before any business was transacted earnest prayer was offered by Messrs. Burt, Davis, Cooke, and Caven. A resolution was passed, in which the Association expressed its painful sense of the loss which they had sustained in the unexpected and premature death of their greatly beloved friend and brother the Rev. James Smedmore, and of sympathy with the church at Forton, and the sorrowing family. In the afternoon, at three o'clock, Mr. Chambers prayed, and the letters from the churches were read, many of which were of an encouraging character, altogether showing a clear increase of more than double what it was last year. The Rev. Philip Bailhache closed with a brief address. In the evening, at seven o'clock, a public meeting in connection with the district mission was held, the Rev. J. Brasted in the chair. The Rev. F. Wills prayed, Rev. J. B. Burt read the report, and addresses were delivered by Messrs. Collings, Caven, Green, of London, and Davis. On the Wednesday morning, at seven o'clock, Messrs. Fielder, Tanswell, Warne, and Burt prayed, and Mr. Gray gave an address. At eleven o'clock Mr. M'Owen (Independent) read and prayed, and Mr. Cooke preached the Association sermon from John xii. 24. In the afternoon at three o'clock a meeting for fraternal conference was held under the presidency of the Rev. J. Davis, at which Messrs. Tanswell, Horn, Godwin,

Hockin, Orchard, Hitching, Collier, Parsons, Pope, and Fielder took a part. In the evening, at seven o'clock, Mr. Collier read and prayed, and the Rev. J. Davis preached from 2 Tim. iv. 5. Afterwards a united communion service was held; the communicants and spectators were addressed by Messrs. Moses and Hitching. The Rev. Thomas Morris was re-elected secretary, and the Rev. J. B. Burt treasurer.

Bristol Association.—The meetings of the above Association were held at Cheddar, on Wednesday and Thursday, the 18th and 19th of May. On the Wednesday the services were chiefly devotional. The letters from the churches were read in the afternoon, and an address delivered by the Rev. E. Probert. The statistics showed an increase by baptism in twenty-five reporting churches of 143, and a clear increase of 50. No Circular Letter was prepared in consequence of the illness of the gentleman who had undertaken that duty. In the evening the Rev. D. Wassell read and prayed, the Rev. J. Penny preached (the Rev. N. Haycroft and Dr. Gotch having failed through illness), and the Rev. H. Clark closed with prayer. On the Thursday, at seven a.m., a prayer-meeting was held under the presidency of the moderator, the Rev. T. Davies, pastor of the church at Cheddar. The Rev. T. M. Ind gave an address, and brethren Nicholson, Pearce, Rolestone, Hall, and Shoel offered prayer. Brethren Gould, Penny, E. Clarke, and Drinkwater also took part in the devotional engagements. A resolution was passed thanking Mr. Haycroft for his services as secretary, regretting his inability to continue them, and appointing brethren Wm. Clark and Penny his successors—brother Pearce to continue as treasurer; and another urging the claims of the Bristol Baptist College. A plan was adopted for giving much greater efficiency to the Association as a home-missionary organisation, and an influential committee appointed to carry it out. Notwithstanding the lamented absence of several ministers from illness, the meetings were characterised by great earnestness and unanimity, while the glorious weather, the attendance at the public services, and the unwearied kindness of the friends in Cheddar and its neighbourhood, contributed to make it one of the most pleasant of such gatherings.

Suffolk and Norfolk Home Missionary Union.—The annual meeting of this Association, comprising eighteen churches and stations, was held at Botesdale, in Suffolk, on Thursday, June 9th. The ministers and messengers assembled for the transaction of the business of the Association in the morning. In the afternoon was held the public service for devotional exercises, and reading the letters, from which it appeared that 121 had been added by baptism. From the further statistics of those received from other churches, and by restoration, and, on the other hand, deductions by death, dismissions to other churches, and separations, the result was a clear gain of 87; averaging nearly five to each church. In the evening a public meeting was held, the Rev. J. P. Lewis, of Diss, in the chair, when addresses were delivered as follow:—1. "On the union of prayer and effort for the spread of the Gospel," by the Rev. C. Elven, of Bury. 2. "On Christian life; its nature and manifestation," by the Rev. T. M. Morris, of Ipswich. 3. "On the duty of churches to support their pastors, and the best means of accomplishing it," by the Rev. J. Webb, of Ipswich. It was a happy meeting; all the brethren seemed to be imbued with the sweet spirit of the apostolic injunction, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than himself." Brethren Bentley, Gissing, Sparham, Gallant, Oldring, Cobb, and Sage, engaged in the devotional exercises. The contributions for aiding the various churches and stations requiring it, amounted to £95, and at the close it was felt that there was reason to "thank God and take courage." During the meeting it was also stated that £177 15s. 10d. had been contributed by the churches in Suffolk for the Foreign Mission; and special contributions for the debt, £134 17s. 4d.

Wilts and East Somersetshire Association.—This Association held its general meetings at Westbury Leigh, on May 18th and 19th; the Rev. J. Sprigg, M.A., moderator. The church at Calne was admitted to the Association. The Circular Letter, prepared by the Rev. J. Sprigg, on "Christian Liberality," was read and approved. The Association sermon, on "Christian Influence," was preached by the Rev. S. S. Pugh, of Devizes. A meeting was held for prayer and conference, which was thrown open to Christian brethren of all denominations, at which the Rev. T. G. Rooke, of Frome, presided; and the Rev. W. Burton, of Frome, gave an address on "The best means of securing the results of our pulpit ministrations." The Revs.

T. King, J. J. Joplin, W. Jones, and T. Hind (Independent); and Messrs. J. Waylen and J. V. Toone, took part in the discussion. The secretary reported that a home missionary agent had been secured for the district occupied by the associated churches, and that he was prosecuting his work with every prospect of success. The letters from the churches were not on the whole of a very cheering character, several having received no additions during the past year, and the losses by death and removal having been very heavy. It is gratifying to be able to add that some of the churches are prosperous, and that others speak hopefully of future prospects. The contributions from all sources were £99 2s. 5d., the whole of which amount, after the deduction of the necessary expenses, is devoted to home missionary purposes in the district, in supporting a missionary, and in aiding the smaller churches which are doing home missionary work. Joshua Whitaker, Esq., Bratton, was reappointed treasurer, and the Rev. S. S. Pugh, Devizes, secretary.

LEICESTERSHIRE ASSOCIATION. — The annual meeting of this Association was held at Countesthorpe on Tuesday, 31st May. At the morning meeting, after singing and prayer, the Rev. J. P. Mursell, of Leicester, took the chair as moderator. The minutes of the past year were confirmed, the treasurer's account presented, and the officers and committee appointed. It was resolved unanimously that a testimonial of esteem to the late Rev. James Blackburn, pastor of the church at Foxton, who died on 27th December, 1863, be inserted in the minutes. A contribution of £2 2s. to the funds of the Baptist Union was voted. The Rev. W. Bull, B.A., of Sutton-in-the-Elms, was requested to prepare a paper for the next anniversary, "On the origin and progress of the Baptist denomination in the county of Leicester." It was resolved that the next annual meeting be held at Monks Kirby, and that the preacher be the Rev. R. Evans, of Countesthorpe. In the afternoon the letters and reports were received. It appeared that the 13 churches in the Association contained 1,560 members, and the clear increase during the past year was 72. Addresses having been delivered by the Rev. H. Angus, of Rugby, Rev. T. Lomas, of Leicester, and the moderator, the meeting was concluded by singing and prayer. In the evening an excellent sermon was delivered by the Rev. T. Bumpus, of Loughborough, from Romans ix.—and a collection was made in aid of the funds.

Intelligence.

FOREIGN.

HOLLAND.—Mr. De Neui, co-pastor of the church at Ihren, writes to Mr. Braun, Secretary of the Baptist Union at Hamburg, as follows?—

"The Lord has so visited us with the showers of his blessing that we can only marvel and exclaim, 'It is the Lord's doing and marvellous in our eyes!' You probably remember that Brother Willms published, last year, a pamphlet in the Dutch language, in reply to a work by two clergymen of the Reformed Church in Holland, written with a view to support the doctrine of Infant Baptism, which was in a very tottering condition in that church. Brother Willms's reply, which set forth the untenable grounds on which the doctrine rests, was much read at Franeker, near Harlingen, a town containing 7,000 or 8,000 inhabitants, in West Friesland, in the kingdom of the Netherlands, where one of the clergymen resided who wrote the book.

"By reading the pamphlet and searching the Scriptures, many of the people became convinced that the words 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,' were not intended to be twisted as they were in the clergymen's book. They then entered into correspondence with Brother Willms, that the way of the Lord might be made more clear to them, and soon after sent an earnest request that some one might come over and preach the Gospel to them. Brother Eckhoff and I were appointed by the church to undertake this missionary journey. Just before we left we had the joy of seeing thirteen converts added to the church at Ihren by baptism. On the following day we set out, and on the morning of the third day's journey we reached Franeker, where we remained a week. It was no sooner known that we were there, than the people came to talk with us; often as many as thirty were in the house at one time, inquiring earnestly after the truth. My translation into Dutch of our 'Confession of Faith,' was very useful, and met with general approval, though the way in which a 'church' was represented

caused some astonishment, for they had always been accustomed to an ecclesiastical council acting and making laws—not the church itself. On the second day we made several visits, and often the sword came into use, though in all love and friendliness. We were astonished at the way these people used their weapons: every objection and difficulty must be set at rest. In the evening I preached in a house, and on the following day paid a visit by request to the preacher of the Mennonite church and its president, Dr. Van Beuren. They both gave me permission to preach on Sunday afternoon in the Mennonite church and also to make this known in the Franeker newspaper, which we accordingly did, and in the afternoon of the same day we went to Harlingen and saw the sea. We visited there a Christian fisherman, truly an 'Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.' He had not allowed his children to be sprinkled, as he thought it unscriptural: another Christian man was with him, who had long been convinced of the fact that scriptural baptism was that of believers by immersion, but knew of no people holding these views. When he found we belonged to a church of baptized believers, the tears came in his eyes and he said, 'To these people I must belong.' We returned by train to Franeker, and on Saturday I entered into correspondence with the clergyman, because some of the people had resolved to be baptized, and as they had formerly been members of his church and had left its communion, I wished to be assured that he had no charges of un-Christian walk to make against them.

"The correspondence was carried on in quite a friendly way on both sides, and resulted in an appointment for us to call on him on Monday morning.

"At length the morning of the Sabbath dawned. We had already had many opportunities of preaching the truth to rich and poor, to old and young. Now we went in the morning to the Mennonite church and heard Dr. Van Delden preach from Eph. vi. 2., and in the afternoon had the joy of preaching to a crowded congregation of 600 or 700 people, in the Dutch language. Drs. Van Beuren and Van Delden, and the Mayor of the town were present.

"In the evening between 70 and 80 people came together again in a private house, and begged me to instruct them on the subject of believers' baptism; but as I knew better than these good people did, that Satan's kingdom is more injured by the conversion of a sinner than by the overthrow of infant baptism, I proposed to them first to hold a service in which I might speak to them more of Christ, that the bands of Christian love between us might not be loosened by controversy, and then afterwards to spend an hour in the consideration of the subject of scriptural baptism. To this all agreed, and we spent an hour or two in spiritual communion with our Lord, and I preached Christ to them, while many were melted to tears. Then I, in all love, begged such as might find the subject of baptism too strong meat, to withdraw; but none went; and now a very dear Christian brother, a merchant, named Wardenburg, requested me in the name of the whole assembly, to give them the promised comparison between infant sprinkling and believers' immersion. I did so, and the Lord enabled me so to set forth the two systems and their fruits, that all present said they were convinced of the truth of my arguments and the scripturality of our views. I concluded with the words, 'Search the Scriptures.' Mr. Wardenburg then thanked me in the name of the meeting, and the people dispersed, leaving me in a state of intense fatigue from the labour, excitement, and happiness of the day.

"On Monday morning we went by appointment at ten o'clock to the clergyman. Another member of the church council was present. They were very friendly and polite, and gave a satisfactory report of our friends, but seemed studiously to avoid all points of controversy.

"In the afternoon we took leave of the friends—wrote an address of thanks to the president and preacher of the Mennonite church, and then met the four persons who wished to be at once baptized. In the presence of several witnesses they professed their faith in Christ and were immersed in the name of the Triune Jehovah: they were formed into a church, and we partook of the Lord's Supper together, and rejoiced greatly in the Lord. Two of these brethren returned with us to Ihren, and spent a week here.

"The Mennonites have just built themselves a new church, and their old one will now become the private property of Mr. Wardenburg. He is willing to let it to the Baptists, and they are willing at once to engage it, if I will promise to go over and preach to them two Sundays out of every five. The church at Ihren are willing to spare me for this purpose, and I only wait the approval of the committee of the Union, before entering on this new and deeply interesting field of labour."

Of course it is needless to say that the committee joyfully gave their approval.

DOMESTIC.

SALTER'S HALL CHAPEL, ISLINGTON.—This chapel, which has recently been secured for the church and congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. Jesse Hobson, was opened for Divine worship on Tuesday, June 14th. In the morning, the Rev. G. M. Davis, of Maberley Chapel, opened the service. The Rev. J. H. Hinton, M.A., read the Scriptures and prayed; and the Hon. and Rev. R. W. Noel, M.A., preached. In the afternoon more than 200 ministers and friends sat down to an excellent luncheon, provided by Mr. Brown, of St. John's Wood; after which, in the absence of Sir S. M. Peto, Bart., who was confined to his house through illness, W. M'Arthur, Esq., presided; and